THE EFFECTIVE AND TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACTS OF MEDIA MINISTRY ON LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES

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ABSTRACT

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This project investigated the impacts of media ministry on low-income, public housing communities in Hopewell, Virginia. It was hypothesized that increased accessibility to the Christian message of hope via media would produce acknowledgeable and measurable changes within the impoverished residents. Mixed methods of research employing quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews in pretest and posttest formats, data from archives, literature reviews, online sources and printed materials were used to measure results. One finding was a grave mistrust for the Church, but a great desire for Christ. As a result many participants committed or recommitted to an active relationship with Jesus Christ.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

"He said to them, 'There are a great many people to harvest, but there are only a few workers. So pray to God, who owns the harvest, that he will send more workers to help gather his harvest. Go now, but listen! I am sending you out like sheep among wolves'" (Luke 10:2-3 NCV).

I am grateful to GOD for instilling within me the ability to hear HIS Voice, acknowledge The Works of HIS Hands and the strength to submit to HIS Divine and Perfect Will. I honor my Mother, Betty Marie Campbell McCoy, for always pushing me to accomplish the things that you only dreamt. I honor my surrogate Father and natural Uncle, Dexter DeWayne Campbell, for consistently reminding me that "lazy people are average people, and Marc, you're not average, so you can't afford to be lazy," because your approval has remained a motivation for my successes. I honor the illustrious Dr. James Wallace Reynolds, Sr., aka "Pops", my Father-in-Ministry, for enlightening me that "a lawyer can not practice law without the proper instruction, a medical doctor can not practice medicine without the proper schooling and a expert mechanic does not become an expert without the proper training. So, do not misrepresent GOD by preaching without the proper instruction, schooling and training." Your strong voice of love, practicality and wisdom resound in my ears daily. I honor the most distinguished Dr. Robert Allen Diggs, Sr., my Pastor, spiritual covering, brother in arms, bond and labor, and wise counsel. Your profound guidance of "it's not the journey that's worth the fare you will pay, but it's what

you learn along the way" has helped me to remain focused on the vision while enjoying all of the moments in route to fulfilling it.

To the Pastors Kevin M. Northam, George W. Northington, Jr., Carlos Jordan, Antonio A. Tucker and Rudolph Dunbar, thank you all for being allies and compatriots during my wilderness season. Each of you envisioned nothing less than success for me.

To Steve Benham and Kathryn Thompson of the Hopewell Redevelopment and Housing Authority, and the residents of the Davisville and Bland Court Complexes, thank you for granting me access to the properties, and participating in this unique quest to make our community a better place. I am indebted to Judith Smith, Linda Carr, Sabrina Scott, Kathryn Thompson, Stephanie Wilson and William Jasper D'Cory Blackman for your critical and detailed feedback. Your questions on top of questions presented and continuous, unparalleled interests invested into this project. I express a special thanks to Drs. Larry Brown, Anthony Chandler and Shedrick McCall for serving as professional associates and sounding boards of academic processing.

Lastly, I am forever appreciative to Dr. Stephen Swisher for the countless hours of your continuous mentorship and unbiased feedback that pushed me when I did not want to go. I am undyingly grateful to Dr. Lance Watson for your availability in guiding me through the endless forest of possibilities, and for holding me accountable for my stated purpose. And, I am eternally indebted to Reverend Harvey Jones, Jr., for your relentless commitment, labor and loyalty to this process and project. The irreplaceable hours, weeks and months that you invested at my side entitles you to immortality in my heart. "The success of a man is determined by the people who love and support him."

—Marcus D. Campbell, Sr.

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to the memory of my Grandmother, Zettie Lee Pumphrey Campbell Clary Neal, who invested her life loving GOD and helping those in need. To the memory of my Grandfather, Reverend George Toliver Blackman, Sr., who invested his life loving GOD and preaching The Gospel. To the memory of my Father, William Toliver Blackman, who invested his life loving, helping and preaching with GOD. They all invested into me.

This work is dedicated to my wife, JaJuana, who is the answer to my prayers and lover of my soul. And, to the gifted, intelligent crew known as “The Campbell Clan” who believe that their Dad can do anything, but fail… I LOVE YOU!

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ALCCI	Abundant Life Christian Center International
AME	African Methodist Episcopal
CDs	Compact Discs
COGIC	Church Of God In Christ
COOLJC	Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ
DVDs	Digital Video Discs
Etc.	*Et cetera*
HCVP	Housing Choice Voucher Program / Section 8
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRHA	Hopewell Redevelopment and Housing Authority
HUD	United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
KJV	King James Version
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
NCV	New Century Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
PHA	Public Housing Agency
VHDA	Virginia Housing Development Authority

INTRODUCTION

The modern Christian church has long been mislabeled as ineffective and useless to the poor, or people who are impoverished and marginalized. This perceived fact is predicated on the assumption that The Gospel of Jesus Christ is no longer effective, impactful or transformative within our communities. While financial difficulties have been a consistent factor in global societies for centuries there has emerged an American trend of hopeless acceptance of poverty that spans the last twenty-five to thirty years. This hopelessness has created an institution of bondage that incarcerates all ages, genders and races. "Whether the poor have succumbed to a deviant subculture or a defeatist psychology, the implication is the same: poverty is the result of poor people's own impaired values."[1] These values are impaired, again, due to the assumption that The Gospel of Jesus Christ is no longer effective, impactful or transformative.

This research project explores the premise that poverty is a spiritual ailment that can be combated and defeated by consistent exposure to the message of hope, The Gospel of Jesus Christ, recorded in the scriptures of the Holy Bible. It [this project] is a direct result of personal experiences in conjunction with the context that led the researcher to identify and take action to mitigate this problematic condition. It is missional in nature, and not evangelistic. The intent is to connect with the poor within their context, and assist

[1] Edward Royce, *Poverty & Power: The Problem of Structural Inequality* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009), 50.

with acknowledging, combating and overcoming their circumstances and situations. The unique implementation of media tools as a means to address the stigma being carried by the modern Christian church provided the residents of Davisville and Bland Court, public housing complexes within the city of Hopewell, Virginia, consistent access to the message of hope without the influence of the Church.

The researcher, who is the Senior Pastor of the Abundant Life Christian Center International, located in Hopewell, Virginia, directed this project. Those who assisted in this study, the project support team, were contextual associates from the congregation of ALCCI specifically trained to engage the target population from an academic angle. Their greatest challenge was not interacting with the people, but it was restraining the uncontrollable desire to minister to them. It is this involvement that served as confirmation that the researcher's hypothesis had begun to gain traction.

This project gave the target population the message of hope on prerecorded DVDs over the course of several weeks. Different members of the project support team delivered the DVDs to all residents of Davisville and Bland Court complexes on the same day of each week, and approximately at the same time of the day. This prevented personal relationships from being created and possibly contaminating the research. This project was not designed to transition people back into the church. It was designed to determine if whether or not the Gospel of Jesus Christ is still impactful enough to produce effective and transformative results. A suggested follow-on to this project would be to build upon the outcomes by customizing this model to address the trends discovered as a product of this research.

The following chapters provide a detailed explanation of the ministry model; the literary work that supports this research project; the foundations that undergird the research; the methodology regarding project design and implementation; the field experience; the data analysis; and the reflection, summary and conclusion.

Chapter one contains the ministry focus that details the focus of the project and why it was chosen. This chapter provides specific information about the researcher and the context in which the researcher designed this project. There is a clear indication as to why this project is important to the researcher, and it identifies the problem and the process for solution. It contains a portion of the spiritual autobiography of the researcher that encompasses life occurrences, spiritual acknowledgement and growth, and pivotal traumatic experiences. The conclusion of this chapter is synergized in order to give life to this project.

Chapter Two contains the state of the art of this ministry model that details why this area of ministry was chosen, insights into how this ministry was designed to work and the literature work that informs this project. It provides a dialogue with authors who have relative literary work that speak to foundational tenants of this research. There are various books, essays and periodicals used by the researcher to argue, defend and present pertinent information relevant to the existence of this project.

Chapter Three focuses on the foundational writings that undergird the theory of this project, and outlines the understanding of liberation theology as the approach of resolution. This chapter contains biblical, historical and theological research that reinforces the problem statement and supports the solution. The biblical foundation writings contain Old and New Testament scripture references that address the project,

and the solution through exegetical composition. This chapter exhibits a correlation between a problem within biblical scriptures and a problem within the modern context of this research. It also provides a correlation between the salvation or solution detailed in biblical scripture, and the salvation or solution unveiled by the researcher.

Chapter Four explains the methodology in detail employed by the researcher. It contains the hypothesis, an explanation of the entire research process and the research design. This chapter includes the list of research methods and evaluations, and the detailed timeline for the project. This project called for interviews and questionnaires that served as instruments to understand the position and thoughts of the target population. The researcher compared before and after positions and thoughts of the research pool through a pretest and posttest format.

Chapter Five provides insight to the field experience which gives an in-depth account of the implemented project, including input and reactions, responses and reflections of the target population. It introduces the data collected, an analysis of that data and examines the effectiveness of the data collection methods inclusive of qualitative and quantitative measures verified by triangulation. This chapter concludes with details of the outcomes of this research.

Chapter Six contains the reflections, a summary and the conclusions that were experienced during this project, and the process associated with it. This chapter reveals personal thoughts of the researcher and makes suggestions to what could be done to advance this research for greater outcomes. The conclusion provides the final thoughts of the entire project derived from the viewpoint of the researcher.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Spiritual Autobiography

The researcher is the first child of both parents whom were never married. His mother, Betty Marie Campbell McCoy, and father, William Toliver Blackman (deceased), were high school seniors and best friends when he was born. They both possessed aspirations, dreams and goals that did not include being parents at such young ages, so they continued after them. The researcher relocated with his mother several times between 1977 and 1984 living in Warren and Monticello, Arkansas; Chicago, Illinois and Houston, Texas; and finally resettling back in Warren. It was there that a family support system of grandparents, uncles and cousins cultivated and influenced the researcher, and his moral basis. However, the factors of having a young mother, an absent father, relatives with families and responsibilities of their own and the rural area of southern Arkansas made life difficult to accept and manage.

Racism in the 1980s was a major tension point in rural Arkansas. The culture virtually denied the researcher access to greater opportunities due to his last name not being a name associated with influence or prominence. While the family's name did not carry a negative stigma equally it was not considered a name with much weight. Therefore, each moment of achievement, advancement and success came at the cost of

tremendous self-sacrifice and uniqueness. The researcher's light-skinned complexion marginalized him as an outcast amongst peers and adult community members. He recalls a saying from his Grandmother, who was also light-skinned, "Being high yellow ain't easy. You too dark to be white, and too light to be black. So, black folks don't want you, and white folks won't have you. Boy, make your own way!" This was her attempt to encourage the researcher to remove all excuses and need for social acceptance, and set goals independent of others. Her words acted as a catapult helping him to overcome many of the factors associated with poverty, like hopelessness.

The researcher's entire childhood education was established and enhanced in the Warren Public Schools' system. He remained a strong academic performer known for being a permanent fixture in Advanced, College Prepatory, Honors and Gifted/Talented classes. Many academic excellence awards and honors were consistently presented to him, and he always remained listed on the Superior Honor and Honor Rolls. The researcher was a three-year high school varsity letterman in basketball, and a two-year high school varsity letterman in football and track & field. He was an All-Region and All-State honored musician in the high school Band, and stellar leader in the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps or JROTC advancing as the organizations' highest ranked student leader, Cadet Lieutenant Colonel and Battalion Commander with the Superior Cadet Award. All of these accomplishments were achieved while the researcher lived with substandard financial and housing conditions due to the poverty level in his rural community.

The return to Warren, Arkansas aided the researcher's mother to be supported by the thin, family support system available to help care for her two children. This time

period proved to be the most transformative and influential period for the researcher, both ministerially and spiritually. The transition placed him in more consistent and constant supervision of his Grandmother, and she assumed the lead role of ensuring that his ecclesiastical, emotional and ethical development remained focused on Jesus Christ. He was no longer one of her grandchildren in the sense of the word, but now he had become one of her children. Each Sunday morning she mandated the researcher to awake at 7:00 A.M. in order to wash up, make his bed and prepare for breakfast. At 7:30 A.M., his paternal Grandfather would be heard preaching during the Gospel Hour on the local radio station, KWRF 105.5 FM, followed by the Local News, and the Annie B. Patton Gospel Show, which was the only African-American gospel music heard within a thirty-mile radius. It was a Sunday ritual of listening to these programs while preparing for Sunday School that started at 9:30 A.M. They had a seventeen-mile journey from their home in Warren, to the homestead of Banks, Arkansas. These moments were spent with his Grandmother gaining wisdom about life, learning to overcome hardships and understanding the importance of true commitment. It was during these times that she deposited respect and trust into the researcher, and instilled the desire to go beyond the expectations of others.

The family belonged to the First Baptist Banks Church. The name of the church was significantly organized as such in order to signify it as the *black* First Baptist Church and not the *white* First Baptist Church. The *white* church was named The First Baptist Church of Banks. “In fact, the chasm between the white and black church was unbridgeable: any gesture that signified equality was unacceptable to whites; and any

gesture that implied black inferiority was unacceptable to blacks."[1] Racism remains prominent and undeniable, yet it served as one of the developmental points for the researcher's liberative theological stance. These variables further contributed to the personal and spiritual growth of the researcher, and the birthing of this project.

The researcher's family context included him being raised by his young adult mother, and with a younger brother, who was three and one-half years his junior. His mother was employed as an In-Home Health Care Aid, which was a nonunionized job that compensated the U.S. Department of Labor's minimum wage of $3.35 per hour from 1981 – 1989. She worked an average of thirty-three hours per week equaling to a weekly gross income of $110.55, a monthly gross income of $479.05 and an annual gross income of $5,748.60. In comparison to present day poverty calculations the researcher's family lived on approximately $1,916.20 per person annually, which placed them $2,711.40 *below* the U.S. poverty line that was reported as being $8,460 annually for a family of three people. This impoverished context did not afford him quality health care or health insurance. Those conditions also did not bestow opportunities for cultivation outside of the restrictive environment of the pseudo-integrated South. There were only a select few programs directed at redeveloping a community suffering from economic depravity, and it clearly depicted indentured servitude towards its' labor force. They were poorer than the poor.

[1] Samuel DeWitt Proctor, *Substance of Things Hoped For* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1995), 24.

> What does wisdom tell us about the poor? Even where there is so much wisdom, poverty exists. The poor cannot always blame others for their condition, though wisdom recognizes that the cause also lies outside the individual. They have access to the key that will release them from poverty to prosperity, and that key is the paradigm of hard work, prudence, righteousness and diligence. In Job it is the principle of retribution. In Ecclesiastes it is anti-wisdom, a return to the prime cause, the God of your creation. In the wisdom literature the poor man is poor almost by his choice. But at the same time the oppressor who has taken advantage of him is recognized.[2]

It was the wisdom provided by the environmental norms that caused the researcher's mother to choose to maintain substandard employment as a means of provisions rather than to completely surrender to the oppression of a prejudice, segregated and unjust community system. This directly correlates to the present ministry context of the researcher.

The Context

The ministry context of the researcher is as the Senior Pastor of the Abundant Life Christian Center International (ALCCI) of Hopewell, Virginia. It is a grassroots ministry established on April 8, 2012, and has approximately two hundred and twenty-one members, sixty-three families, and an average weekly attendance of one hundred and seventy worshippers. Currently, there are two Sunday Morning Worship Services at 8:00 A.M. and 10:30 A.M., and a Thursday Evening Bible Study at 7:30 P.M. weekly.

ALCCI's work is rooted in practical theology, and the efforts found therein are to grow and solidify the local Christian church. "Practical theology is tied closely to the lives of congregations and individuals. Rather than moving from faith to life (theory to

[2] Sebastian C.H. Kim and Krickwin C. Marak, *Good News To The Poor: The Challenge To The Church* (Delhi, India: Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1997), 25.

practice), it moves from life to faith and then back to life (practice to theory to practice)."[3] An example of the practice utilized by the ministry is the implementation of a less-traditional dress code. Congregants and leaders dress casual throughout the year, not for the purpose of being comfortable, but with the intent of making comfortable the average unchurched person that walks into a worship service unexpectedly. The theory associated with this practice is readable in Mark 7:1-13:

> Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.' You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition." Then he said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition! For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'Whoever speaks evil of father or mother must surely die.' But you say that if anyone tells father or mother, 'Whatever support you might have had from me is Corban' (that is, an offering to God)— then you no longer permit doing anything for a father or mother, thus making void the word of God through your tradition that you have handed on. And you do many things like this."[4]

The practice of a casual dress code translates into not making the Word of God void through traditions. These traditions result in the exclusion of certain people because they do not meet religious dress codes.

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[3] Nancy T. Ammerman, *Studying Congregations* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998), 25.

[4] Mark 7:1-13 (New Revised Standard Version).

ALCCI's vision is to supply a greater, sustaining impact on domestic and international communities through Jesus Christ than all other impacts implemented without Christ. It desires to help all people to accomplish their goals and purpose with Jesus Christ instead of committing to an ungodly method of achievement. This vision is interconnected with the evangelistic and discipleship mission of the Christian church, which is the Great Commission of Christ given to His disciples in Matthew 28. "God invites us to mission growth. Mission growth congregations focus on mission growth more than church growth."[5] A key tenant of ALCCI's focus on mission growth is highlighted in their community development efforts. They have invested the preceding years in establishing community relationships through the collaboration of public-private partnerships with civic, corporate, educational, and governmental organizations. ALCCI currently works in partnership with: Smart Beginnings, a subsidiary of the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation; the Hopewell Chamber of Commerce; the Crater Planning Commission, a small business development cooperative; Strosnider Chevrolet Automotive Dealership; the Hopewell Public Schools; the Hopewell City Council; the Hopewell Fire and Police Departments; and the Hopewell Redevelopment and Housing Authority. These partnerships serve as conduits to extend their Christian message of hope beyond their physical locale, and helps to foster sustaining impacts throughout the Hopewell community. ALCCI organized and hosted "Community Day 2012" with the aid of a few of the aforementioned partners. More than three-hundred and fifty community individuals, who were not affiliated with ALCCI directly, were serviced with: financial planning seminars and tools; restoration of felony offender's voting rights;

[5] Kennon L. Callahan, *Twelve Keys to an Effective Church* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 240.

voter's registration; A.I.D.S. and H.I.V. awareness, education and testing; IdentiKid Screening and Services; Virginia Employment Commission's Job Interviewing and Placement; Free Food and Entertainment; and three families, who were without viable means of transportation, were given cars on behalf of ALCCI and Strosnider Chevrolet.

This project's general area of focus is the City of Hopewell, Virginia, that has a total population of approximately 47,242 according to the 2010 United States Bureau and Census' report.

> The census is especially valuable for helping us see "invisible" people because of its legally imposed obligation to count all people in the United States. The extent to which the Census Bureau has fully complied with that obligation has been a matter of dispute for years, particularly as large cities and minority advocate groups have argued that the undercounting of homeless people, minority males, and non-English speakers yield disadvantages to both them, and the jurisdictions within which they reside. Despite such undercounting, census figures are the best estimates we have for numbers in all population categories, and we will present three illustrations making use of them.[6]

Currently, the population is 49.7 percent male and 50.3 percent female; 60.6 percent are white only, 31.2 percent are black only, 6.1 percent are of Hispanic origin, and 2.1 percent are a composite of Asian, Indian and multiracial backgrounds. The population consists of 89.3 percent of the civilian labor force being employed and 10.7 percent are unemployed.

The project's specific area of community, contextual focus is the Hopewell Redevelopment Housing Authority's (HRHA) five properties. It is a low-income, multi-family public housing network intended to provide temporary, residential assistance and relief to families within the city who have encountered financial hardships to such the

[6] Ammerman, 55.

extent that their ability to provide adequate shelter is of none effect. The HRHA was established in 1939, and maintains a governing board of seven members known as the Board of Commissioners who are all appointed by the Hopewell's City Council. Funding for the management and operation of HRHA is secured through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) or Federally-funded Section 8, the Virginia Housing Development Authority's (VDHA) HCVP or State-funded Section 8, and rental income collected from the residents on a monthly basis. Applicants for both programs are selected from waiting lists, and must satisfy eligibility criteria. Rent is a function of income, and so higher family income produces higher rent.

HUD's HCVP is the federal government's major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Since housing assistance is provided on behalf of the family or individual, participants are able to find their own housing, including single-family homes, townhouses and apartments. The participant is free to choose any housing that meets the requirements of the program and is not limited to units located in subsidized housing communities/complexes/projects. Rental units must meet minimum standards of health and safety, as determined by the Public Housing Agency (PHA). A housing subsidy is paid to the landlord directly by the PHA on behalf of the participating family, then the family pays the difference between the actual rent charged by the landlord and the amount subsidized by the program. Under certain circumstances, if authorized by the PHA, a family may use its voucher to purchase a modest home.

Eligibility for a HUD housing voucher is determined by the PHA based on the total annual gross income and family size, and is limited to U.S. citizens and specified categories of non-citizens who have eligible immigration status. In general, the family's income may not exceed 50% of the median income for the county or metropolitan area in which the family chooses to live. By law, a PHA must provide 75% of its vouchers to applicants whose incomes do not exceed 30% of the area's median income. Median income levels are published by HUD, and vary by location. The following is the income and family size guidelines for HRHA for 2014:

Family Household Size	Income
1 Person	$25,900
2 Persons	$29,600
3 Persons	$33,300
4 Persons	$36,950
5 Persons	$39,950
6 Persons	$42,900
7 Persons	$45,850

HRHA 2014 Family Size and Income Guidelines
Figure 1.

During the application process, the PHA will collect information on family income, assets, and family composition. They will verify this information with other local agencies, the applicant's employer and bank, and will use the information to determine program eligibility and the amount of the housing assistance payment. If the PHA determines that a family is eligible, the PHA will put their name on a waiting list, unless

it is able to assist the family immediately. Once a family's name is reached on the waiting list, the PHA will contact them and issue a housing voucher. HUD authorized the HRHA the following financial assistance for its Housing Choice Voucher and public housing programs for fiscal years 2011 through 2013:

Fiscal Year	Housing Choice Voucher Program authorized funds	Public Housing Program authorized funds
2013	$1,774,717	$1,808,941
2012	$1,931,854	$1,810,699
2011	$2,435,435	$1,814,826
Total	**$6,142,006**	**$5,434,466**

HUD Authorized Funds to HRHA for 2011 – 2013
Figure 2.

The Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) is a self-supporting, not-for-profit organization created by the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1972, to help Virginians attain quality, affordable housing. VHDA provides mortgages, primarily for first-time homebuyers and developers of quality rental housing. They use no state taxpayer dollars, but raise money in the capital markets to fund loans. VHDA also teaches free homeownership classes, and assist people with disabilities and the elderly to make their homes more livable. The organization works with lenders, developers, local governments, community service organizations and others to help put quality housing within the reach of every Virginian. Since its' founding, VHDA has committed financing for more than 182,000 single-family homes and 144,000 multifamily units. Funds are raised annually through the capital markets to support lending for Single-Family and Multifamily Loan programs. Investors purchase VHDA securities and loans, and this, in

turn, generates their principal source of capital. These securities do not constitute a debt or obligation of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Participation in either of the HCVPs is limited to the availability of funding. All HCVP rental housing must pass initial and annual housing quality inspections, and rents charged by landlords must meet HUD and VHDA rent comparable test requirements. The five properties within the (HRHA) network that fall within these categories are: Davisville/Bland Court Community with approximately one-hundred and twenty units and families; Kippax Place Senior Citizen Complex with approximately one-hundred units and families reserved specifically for individuals fifty-five years of age and older; Langston Park Community with approximately thirty units and families; Piper Square Community with approximately one-hundred and twenty units and families; and Thomas Rolfe Court Community with approximately one-hundred and thirty-six units and families. The published cost of public housing accommodations with HRHA for 2014 is as follows:

Bedroom Size	2014 Payment Standard
1	$747
2	$886
3	$1,165
4	$1,411

HRHA 2014 Cost of Public Housing
Figure 3.

As stated earlier a family household consisting of one person is allowed to have a gross income of $25,900 annually which translates to approximately $19,425/year in net

income. The annual housing cost, per HRHA guidelines, totals $8,964 for a one bedroom apartment meaning that approximately 46 percent of a resident's income would be used solely for shelter without addressing the expenses associated with food, clothing, healthcare, home furnishing, transportation or utilities. Fortunately, a benefit of the HRHA system is that residents are provided assistance with the primary utilities: electricity, gas, trash, water and sewage. The requirement of the program is that the resident pays an undisclosed percentage or portion of the total utilities cost monthly.

> As Christians with a heart for our low-income communities, we bring a special set of values to the economic arena, values that include the *common good*, not just individual interests over the interests of the community. That changes both how and why we are involved in economic development. Ours is a people-focused effort, not just the accumulation of individual wealth and property. The measure of our success is found in improved living conditions, a sense of human dignity, and improved community conditions. We know that without ownership, without opportunity for gainful employment, and without opportunity to build a future for the children, people in our communities will continue to live in despair and frustration.[7]

A family household of two is allowed a gross income of $29,600 annually translating to approximately $22,200/year in net income. The HRHA guidelines for a two bedroom apartment totals $10,632 per year in housing cost, or 48 percent of a resident's income, and $5,784/year or $482/month per person allotted for living expenses; a family household of three with a three bedroom apartment totals $13,980 per year in housing cost, or 56 percent of a resident's income, and $3,665/year or $305/month per person allotted for living expenses; a family household of four with a four bedroom apartment totals $16,932 per year in housing cost, or 61 percent of the resident's income, and

[7] John M. Perkins, *Restoring At-Risk Communities: Doing It Together & Doing It Right* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995), 141.

$2,695/year or $225/month per person allotted for living expenses; a family household of five with a four bedroom apartment totals $16,932 per year in housing cost, or 57 percent of the resident's income, and $2,606/year or $217/month per person allotted for living expenses; and a family household of six with a four bedroom apartment totals $16,932 per year in housing cost, or 53 percent of the resident's income, and $2,540/year or $211/month per person allotted for living expenses. The aforementioned statistics are justifiable reasons for residents of low-income housing to be in despair. The absence of the Christian church and its' message of hope is also a justifiable reason for those same residents to remain in an impoverished lifestyle totally dependent on government assistance.

These calculations are very realistic for the researcher, because as a non-resident of the HRHA properties, nor a participant in HUD or VHDA's HCVP. His family's household is six residents with a gross income of $37,636 annually; net income of $28,228/year; housing cost of $19,200 or 68 percent of the researcher's income; and it allots only $1,505/year or $125/month per person of usable income for living expenses. Unfortunately, the researcher is not a participant in any other program that assists with clothing, food, healthcare, transportation or utility costs. This is a good example that living with low-income is not the same as living in a low-income environment, or a low-income mindset. While the financial perspectives of the researcher and the context are very much similar, the hypothesized difference is the researcher's consistent exposure to, and belief in the Christian message of hope. Constantly being exposed to the oratorical and practical reminders that God's Grace and Love has a much greater impact than the overwhelming circumstances of any present environment is a motivator for forward

progression. It is the Christian message of hope that opens the mind and the spirit to a clearer rationale, and understanding of God's Divine Plan and Will for low-income, marginalized, oppressed and poor individuals. Faith in God's Plan yields the spiritual strength to manifest as natural, physical strength; and, the spiritual insight to guide His chosen people to a better place economically, emotionally, financially, mentally and residentially.

> Our own view is quite different. Theology clarifies the truth of faith, and this demands theoretical rigor and logical consistency (*fides quae creditor*). But faith (*fides qua creditor*) is constitutively an existentially practical reality involving an option to live agapeistically and with historical responsibility. In this primordial sense, theology articulates a practical truth with a view to making it more evangelically practicable. The faith that seeks understanding through theology is not so much a set of concepts as a way of life. If theology is faith seeking understanding, then the ultimate aim of theological truth is a more informed and thereby more consistent faith praxis. The praxis of faith is the very space within which theological reflection operates, being both its source and its goal. But the praxis of faith is concerned with every dimension of God's salvific action, including the cultural, the social, and the process of history. Therefore, the concept of theological truth does include intrinsically its historical efficacy which is why the practical perspective of the theologian becomes a crucial question for theological method.[8]

This project seeks to provide creditable evidence that the Christian message of hope, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the *euangélion* also known as the Good News of the message of Jesus the Christ has been, is and will continue to be effective and transformative for low-income communities. It is this researcher's position that there is a violation of the community by the Christian church's absence, and that the most viable tool to connect or reconnect with the disparaged, hopeless and violated community is

[8] John O'Brien, *Theology and the Option for the Poor* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 48.

with Christian media ministry. This tool will allow the Christian message of hope to be accepted as a personal, prophetic message. A message that is specific for the recipient, a relationship establisher and builder with the media personality/pastor, and an invitation to re-enter society with increased inspiration and motivation to progress forward.

According to the Contextual Analysis research conducted prior, approximately ninety-four percent of the residents of the HRHA complexes live in poverty. The conditions of poverty are more than just a financial struggle, but it serves as an emotional, intellectual, mental, relational and spiritual struggle as well. Families that are living in poverty devote a great portion of their attention and time towards accruing the necessary financial resources to provide for the needs of their families, that oftentimes emotional distress is developed from the frustrations of failure, the lack of opportunities and the absence of physical rest. "Simply put, ideology is deformed thought, meaning that a certain idea or ideas are nothing but the function of the subjective interest of an individual or group. Truth therefore becomes what an individual wishes it to be as defined in accordance with that person's subjective desires."[9]

People challenged by economic hardships become the oppressed when they experience consistent defeat due to the lack of spiritual help. The financial distraction causes a severe avalanche affecting the mind's interpretations of right and wrong, good and bad, positive and negative, hope and lies, and the doubt that God exists. One of the key elements of spiritual exposure that the researcher's Grandmother accomplished was programing him to listen to the local radio, and watch television gospel broadcasts on a weekly basis. This experience planted concepts, ideas and questions that caused a desire to search for answers and validation. It was via the Christian radio and television

[9] James H. Cone, *God of the Oppressed* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997), 83.

broadcasts that shared The Word of God over the airwaves that added value to the researcher's feeble church experiences to help develop a spiritual base required to advance him through difficult times and times of question. Similarly, this project's ministry context utilized introductory media tools to plant seeds of interest and knowledge into the minds of the families and residents of the low-income community. These tools were steps to enhance and/or increase their spiritual relationship with God, and to test its' ability to help them to overcome.

This project is rooted in the spiritual background and development of the researcher. It serves as a bridge, and healing solution to the age-old religious wounds of neglect that were never treated. The researcher expected the Christian church and its' members to serve as deliverers of hope in the midst of an impoverished lifestyle. Their absence and failure created grave mistrust, and disbelief that added to the already mounted violations of his marginalized life. Equally, the research will show that this is the same position as the target population within the context, and rob them of hope. In addition, many other violations that are secretive and unmentionable within low-income communities, such as child molestation, incest, parental abandonment, premature alcohol and/or drug exposure, rape, etc., serve as larcenists of faith and pilferagers of hope. "Much of what passes for community in contemporary culture is simply a social extension of individualism. We establish community groups that are icons of personal fulfillment, affirmations of consumerism and personal tastes, and bastions of homogeneity. Many of our neighborhoods and suburban subdivisions, social clubs, recreational gatherings, and sadly our churches might be more appropriately called

lifestyle enclaves rather than community."[10] It is the constant exposure to the same demeaning and self-destructive behaviors, generally found in the physical environment of low-income, public housing complexes that result in economical, emotional, mental and physical bondage. This produces self-awareness, self-esteem and self-imaging challenges that are difficult to change. "Low self-esteem does modestly correlate with drug abuse, delinquency, and underachievement."[11] This environment procreates a misguided sense of acceptance, healthy relationship and love that will generally reproduce greater falsehoods and generational curses. People, literally, stop believing in a *better day* for themselves because everyone living within their immediate surroundings has also ceased to be optimistic.

The researcher experienced the identical, cyclic process of substandard survival, first hand, resulting in damaged faith, a loss of hope and the near forfeiture of all possibilities of a healthy future and life. This is where the active and visible Christian church should have been required to be a defender, and protector of the faith. First Peter 2:13-16 declares:

> Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame.[12]

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[10] Tim Conder, *The Church In Transition: The Journey of Existing Churches into the Emerging Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 50.

[11] David G. Myers, *The American Paradox: Spiritual Hunger in an Age of Plenty* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 165.

[12] First Peter 3:13-16.

The Christian church and its' disciples have an obligation to defend, protect and revive the marginalized as an apologetic validation of their own faith positions. But, it was the absence of the Christian church in the researcher's impoverished and sullied childhood that resulted in the degradation, and eventual loss of faith in God, and hope in a better day ever arriving. "Anything that bypasses our mind is usually, and quite rightly, treated as dangerous. Faith operates, not over against the mind, but on a basis of what the mind can perceive. Faith claims to operate beyond the area within which reason can demonstrate proof, and yet in a way that validates reason as a central human activity."[13]

It is more than apparent that much has not changed over the past thirty-five years in relation to how the Christian church interacts with the low-income, marginalized or urban community. While Sunday morning homilies during holidays reference the poor and less fortunate, and activities are considered during summer breaks and back-to-school seasons, the local Christian church remains absent, invisible and out of touch with the downtrodden of society. It is this absence that has caused many Christian churches to become thinned-out in regular weekly attendances, and an increasingly high number of unchurched people, and non-believers in Jesus Christ. "It has been said that there are three kinds of people in the world: those who never seem to be aware that things are happening around them; those who ask, "What just happened?" and third those who make things happen."[14] Conferences, lectures, seminars and webinars have been created to address devices and steps in church renewal, in part, because the modern church is

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[13] Donald English, *An Evangelical Theology of Preaching* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 59-60.

[14] Myles Munroe, *The Principles and Power of Vision* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 2003), 31.

operating as one of the first two categories of people described by Dr. Monroe: "those who never seem to be aware that things are happening around them; those who ask, 'What just happened?'"

As the researcher struggled with trying to make sense of why God, apparently, did not hear his cries or answer his prayers as a child, he persisted to seek God through any channel that he thought was opened. Even though the interpreted family neglect, financial bondage and faith-shattering violations remained detrimental, the researcher developed resiliency in the midst of his pain. "The biblical God is the God whose salvation is liberation. God is the God of Jesus Christ who calls the helpless and weak into a newly created existence. God not only fights for them but also takes their humiliated condition upon the divine Person and thereby breaks open a new future for the poor, different from their past and present miseries."[15] The researcher laid a claim to a greater spiritual life and vision to never permit his children to encounter this similar form of religion or survival. While he felt that the Christian church of his childhood failed, he remained determined that the Christian church of his adulthood would not repeat his story. "The desperate conditions that face the poor call for a revolution in our attempts at a solution. Through years of experience among the poor, I [Perkins] have come to see these desperate problems cannot be solved without strong commitment and risky actions on the part of ordinary Christians with heroic faith."[16] Since the Christian church is comprised of individual members who assimilate to the polity of the congregation, it is the servant

[15] Cone, 128.

[16] Perkins, 17.

duty of the each member to strongly commit to exercising heroic faith. Faith is not only effective and impactful, but practical faith is transformative.

The "come to us" methodology of modern Christian ministry is self-serving in its' nature, and border-lining heresy in its' operations. It is this methodology that has increased the ineffectiveness of the Christian church, and also jeopardized the survival of the researcher and the researcher's family. Jesus Christ did not leave room for an misinterpretation in Matthew 28: 16-20:

> Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."[17]

The clear and undisputable mandate for all Christian disciples is to go, and make disciples of all nations. The modern Christian church's requirement for "the nations to therefore come" is in direct conflict with the words of Christ, and a strong catalyst for the poor to remain despondent, destitute and downtrodden. The fact that of the eleven Disciples of Christ that gathered in Galilee "some doubted." Clearly, all followers of Christ will not fulfill the Great Commission. Doubters are those without faith, and will disobey the command given by Christ. Modern churches advocating the "come to us" model are disobedient, unfaithful violators of the responsibility assigned by Christ directly.

The researcher did not understand the rationale, within his own community of faith, that the only assistance offered to his single mother and younger brother came

[17] Matthew 28:16-20.

pancaked with the conditional "come to us". Spiritual and sustenance assistance should not be based upon church membership, but church membership based upon spiritual and sustenance support. The local Christian church's absence from the researcher's community, indirectly, advocated for poverty to remain as an acceptable way of life. Poverty was the *status quo* because the Christian message of hope was expressed as a market place commodity based on supply and demand instead of a tool of liberation and salvation. The expression was supplied during Sunday and Wednesday services, during funerals and revivals, but the demand for it was daily. The demand has always been and still remains to be more practical than homiletical. "For you and me [Hicks], it is not simply that we have fallen and are prey to some accidental circumstance over which we have no control. Imagine what it means to be helpless, to struggle day after day knowing that there is no help. Everything is available to us and within finger-tip reach, and we could be better, except for the fact that we have no help. To be helpless is an assault to the ego, one's self-esteem, until at last we see ourselves less than we ought to be, less than we should be, less than we want to be, simply because we have no help."[18] The Christian message of hope is the *help* needed, in a greater supply, by each person that is bound by the economic and spiritual restraints of poverty.

Just as the researcher struggled to remain upright within the overwhelming weight of possessing a greater demand than there was a supply, there are hundreds of families residing within the public housing system of Hopewell who, also, feel helpless. And, it is through all of this helplessness that no one ever inquires to the changes in a child's grades, changes in an adult's behavior, or changes in a teenager's reaction to certain

[18] H. Beecher Hicks, Jr., *My Soul's Been Anchored* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998), 84.

individuals. These are all indicators of a person's deteriorating hope. Hence, individuals who make up what society labels as a "dysfunctional" family choose to learn how to live with the pain of dwindling hope. The researcher, independently, committed to working his way out of the unfortunate circumstances of financial depravity and environmental depression. In spite of not hearing a Christian message of hope, and acknowledging the behavioral message of abandonment by the church liberation matured into reality. "God will direct the steps of someone who makes a concrete plan to move towards what they desire."[19] This project is a product of the aforementioned desire and intent for true liberation to be exercised within low-income communities.

The research problem is the clear and undisputed loss of hope within low-income communities. This is nurtured by the absence and inconsistencies of the Christian church interpreted as violations against those in need. The absence of the Christian church is also an absence of the message of hope, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The inconsistency of the Christian church's involvement within the community, during holidays and special events, voids the practicality of trust. These instances signify violation to those marginalized, and causes them to live in protective, survival mode. Hence, the Christian church's violations make it ineffective at reaching and connecting with the poor. Without a connection to the poor then the message of hope is not transferred, and the remaining hope of the poor is depleted. This project seeks to provide creditable evidence that the Christian message of hope, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is effective and transformative for low-income communities when shared consistently, and directly. It is the position of this researcher that the usage of media tools will serve as the bridge to connect the low-

[19] Munroe, 100.

income with the message of hope. This connection will prove effective by restoring hope/optimism, and transformative by inspiring measurable change in the target population's everyday life.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STATE OF THE ART OF THIS MINISTRY MODEL

A careful and thoughtful comparison of the researcher's spiritual background and the ministry context displays several, overlapping similarities. These similarities or synergies serve as support for the premise and project focus directed at determining "The Effective and Transformative Impacts of Media Ministry on Low-Income Communities." There are six primary assumptions that were explored over the course of this study to either eliminate or validate this project's focus. Those assumptions were that low-income families:

1. Possess access to and utilize basic television channels and services;
2. Possess access to and utilize local television channels and services;
3. Possess access to and utilize local radio stations;
4. Possess access to and utilize Compact Discs (CDs) and Digital Video Discs (DVDs) players;
5. Are more receptive to initial, spiritual enrichment presented within their comfort/private areas (Home, vehicles, etc.) prior to it being presented in an open/public area (Church worship services, special events, etc.); and,
6. Are willing to consciously make life-enhancing changes as a direct result of consistent, spiritual encouragement.

"Knowing the self and knowing the faces of God are part of a social dialogue for believers: a conversation between ancient public texts inscribed by evangelists and prophets, and intuited understanding by mediating on the Word (*lectio divina*), the work of the religious imagination."[1] Christian believers should constantly look inward in order to complete self-examination in comparison to the expectations of God. Spiritual bondage as a result of victimization comes when individuals compare themselves to their environment instead of their intended purpose. This is a conversation that was introduced to those who were discouraged with the perceived limitations on their earning and residential potential. Utilizing the tools of media to engage those who felt abandoned by the Christian church, the *lectio divina* was more impactful and meaningful because the Christian message of hope came to them, in their circumstances as opposed to their having to search for it.

> There is no question that today's media has added an explosive element to the [Creation and Gospel] story. The statistics are unrelenting:
>
> - 99 percent of households in America have at least one television.
> - 66 percent have three or more sets.
> - The average household has the television on 6 hours and 47 minutes per day.
> - 70 percent of day-care centers use television in a typical day.
> - By the time a child finishes elementary school, he [she] has seen 8,000 murders on television.

[1] Claire H. Badaracco, *Quoting God: How Media Shape Ideas about Religion and Culture* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2005), 11.

- By age 18, he [she] has seen more than 200,000 violent acts on television.
- 66 percent of Americans watch TV while they eat dinner.

As a result, the average family only spends 3.5 minutes per week in meaningful conversation with their children. And that's just television.[2]

Based upon this information it is easy to see that our modern, American culture assumes that most households own a television, and that a vast majority of those households also own CD/DVD playing devices. These assumptions were developed and investigated as a part of this process, and research. It is the position of this researcher that these assumptions are true in relation to low-income households as well. It is believed that media ministry can establish or reestablish meaningful relationship, via the Christian message of hope, between the local Christian church and the low-income communities. Media ministry can also create an effective, transformative and positive impact. Reaching the poor through modern advancements that do not require additional costs, or an initiative on their part can prove to be advantageous to communal restoration, and spiritual renewal for a community that believes the Christian church and God has forgotten them.

The Problem

"When religious rhetoric is made into a form of propaganda that establishes a specific position on a political issue as the equivalent of a moral-spiritual conviction,

[2] Phil Cooke, *Branding Faith: Why Some Churches and Nonprofits Impact Culture and Others Don't* (Ventura, CA: Regal Publishing, 2008), 29-30.

simple differences of political opinion can be labeled as evidence of questionable faith and of a lack of authentic spirituality."[3] This is the major challenge that has adorned the Christian church as a result of making promises to the community that have gone unfulfilled. The false promises of assistance with life problems like paying rent or utilities, or help with finding employment has been labeled as *religious* rhetoric. The Christian church has been flagged by community residents for making excuses for their absence. Denominational boundaries, doctrinal differences, geographical positioning and traditionalism are just some of the *political* issues in existence, but they go unacknowledged or unaddressed. Political issues are not reduced to existing in governments only; but are enhanced beliefs and perspectives nurtured from the religious positions of others. In American politics there are conservative, liberal and moderate points of view that exist within the realm of religion. Instead of pitting Democrats, Republicans or Tea Partiers against one another, in the community of faith there has arisen the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.); African Methodist Episcopal Zion (A.M.E. Zion); Apostolic; Assemblies of God; Baptists; Church of God In Christ (C.O.G.I.C.); Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ (C.O.O.L.J.C.); Evangelicals; Fundamentalists; Holiness; Independents; Jehovah's Witnesses; Methodists; Pentecostals; Pentecostal Assemblies of the World; United Methodists; etc. There are also political issues involving the Black church; Caucasian church; Hispanic church; Rural church; Urban church; Traditional church; Contemporary church; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (L.G.B.T.), etc. All are religious factions focused and operating in their preferred polities, which have caused communal and political issues.

[3] Badaracco, 56.

It is the variations of religious polity found within Christianity that have distorted the Christian message of hope and salvation. The message has been distorted to such a degree that it is considered by some as a marketing technique, nonsense, propaganda and/or just plain useless. Dependence on the same religious canon [singular] should not produce so many different stances [plural] within the same avenue of faith. The poor are suffering due to an absence and loss of hope, while the Christian church argues tradition. This is the problem: bureaucracy, capitalism, emotionalism, political unrest, territorialism, traditionalism, comfort and fear have all, to some degree, taken refuge within the structured walls and dying hearts of most modern, Christian churches. While all of those occupants are fighting for the *big piece of chicken* and an extra blanket in the master bedroom, the oppressed are choosing not to knock on the doors of faith for admittance. No one wants to enter a room filled with polarizations and tension, but this is the very ambiance that the Christian church expects the distressed and discouraged to be attracted to for help. These once small differences have evolved into massive discord within the *ecclesia* and distaste within the marginalized community.

> In the 1970s and 1980s, Black congregations were adding "educational wings" to their buildings, responding to a renewed focus on social relevance and community service. But even tiny, "facilities-challenged" storefront churches offer meal service and clothing banks for the homeless. Congregations of all sizes and descriptions are active. The Appleton (Wisconsin) Sanctuary Outreach Ministries Church has Bible study for the homebound, marriage workshops, a child abuse prevention program, a prayerful nutrition and Tae Bo exercise support group, and a stepping ensemble for youth that develops discipline and promotes self-esteem. The Mendenhall Church in Missouri sponsors a not-for-profit corporation that offers legal service, educational mentoring, and skills development. Liberty Baptist in Chicago cosponsors Vision House, a residence and support services center for families affected by HIV/AIDS. Bethel AME in Baltimore offers ministries for college students, substance abusers, people with cancer, the

> incarcerated, senior citizens, and couples, to name a few. The variety of ministries is myriad. Some are underwritten by the individual congregations; others are done in partnership with public and private agencies.[4]

While churches, ministries and worship centers around the world are offering dynamic and relevant service offerings, these offerings are conditional upon the impoverished coming to the organization for assistance, handouts and interpreted pity. These individuals do not come because of an inspiration to improve their lives; they come because of desperation to save their life. Neither salvage nor salvation of life is ever considered. This articulates the schism between faithful living and fearful survival. Individuals that choose to improve their life regardless the circumstances operate in the faith of living, or their spirituality. However, those who choose to react to circumstances in order to save their life operate in the fear of death or their emotions. Theologically, God did not intend to be a second, third…twentieth, thirtieth…next to last or last option in the consciousness of humanity, but God *desires* to be the first and only option. The Christian message of hope inspires people to engage and/or renew their trust in God as the first and only priority. Inspiration drives an individual to change or transform their life with the expectation of living; desperation drives an individual to cleave to the remainder of their life with the plea of surviving. The absence of the Christian church and the message of hope removes this inspiration for *better days*, while the Christian church tries to determine another gimmick, marketing strategy, program, sales pitch or service offering that will *draw* the disenfranchised out of their low place and into their places of service or worship.

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[4] Iva E. Carruthers, Frederick D. Haynes III, and Jeremiah A. Wright, Jr. *Blow the Trumpet in Zion: Global Vision and Action for the 21st Century Black Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005), 50.

This project evolved in importance and relevance due to the decreased visibility of the local, Christian church's activeness, evangelistically and/or missionally, in the low-income community within the City of Hopewell, Virginia. It is this researcher's position that this is due, in part, to the perceived lack of adequate, pastoral supervision within these churches.

> The perception of local, pastoral leadership is not derived from a competitive analysis, and it was not in isolation, but in the pastors' embeddedness in their congregations that the construction of the collective interest took place which led to the decision about strategies. The relationship is a dynamic one, as both the congregation and its leader bring their own history, values, and identity to the mix. To greater or lesser degrees, they shape and are shaped by one another.[5]

The pastoral leadership of the local, Christian church is more influenced by the congregational make-up of the denominationally, politically polarized membership. Instead, the congregation should be influenced by its' pastoral leader and supported by the *lectio* divina. The absence and lack of practical interaction with the oppressed and poor are direct indicators that the local Christian church and/or its' leaders are absent, and not connected to the community. Jesus Christ emphasized His purpose as well as the Christian church's purpose in Luke 4:18-19: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."[6] The absence of the Christian church's connection to and interaction with the marginalized translates to an absence of effective communication with the disparaged [low-income], or the absence of the Christian message of hope.

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[5] Katie Day, *Prelude To Struggle: African American Clergy and Community Organizing for Economic Development in the 1990s* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002), 195.

[6] Luke 4:18-19.

"Across time the church has struggled with this matter. There have been seasons and situations when the church has been able to integrate these responsibilities, and this identity into its understanding and practice. More often than not, however, it has pursued its supervisory task within a hierarchical arrangement that at least hinders, if not denies, the mutual accountability and caring responsibilities of the whole body of believers."[7] Regardless of the internal challenges of fellowship and leadership within the Christian church, the scriptural teachings of Jesus Christ commanding discipleship and world mission should be the priorities of service. The offering totals are immaterial to the Christian message of hope; the popular vote of the congregation or Board of Elders are secondary, or tertiary, to the sharing of the Christian message of hope; anniversary celebrations, retreats, summer mission trips and vacations are not as vital as consistent distribution of the Christian message of hope. This is the problem. The Christian message of hope has taken a back seat to other focuses, missions, priorities and visions of the Christian church. The auxiliaries, committees, departments, ministries, missionaries, small groups and teams conjure ideas and projects that appease egos, but do not spread the Christian message of hope and salvation.

To this avail it is believed that the residents of HRHA, generally speaking, have lost hope of defeating their current circumstances, or of their present circumstances improving. This is a direct result of the Christian message of hope being absent in practice and theory. It is important to emphasize that HRHA is a federal and state public housing agency focused on providing residential assistance. Public housing was never intended to be a permanent solution to housing issues. The presence of multi-generational

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[7] Kenneth Pohly, *Transforming the Rough Places: The Ministry of Supervision* (Franklin, TN: Providence House Publishers, 2001), 14.

families within public housing supports the absence of hope due to the presence of contentment. While there are multiple factors and variables that can, and, possibly, do contribute to their stagnation, it is this researcher's position that many residents remain in public housing due to a lack of hope for a better life. The Christian church's liberative involvement within the community possesses the ability to change this dynamic, and open doors of opportunity for others who are in need of these available services.

The Integration

The history of modern Christian media advancements, as we examine it, is limited to within the last eighty to one hundred years. The Assemblies of God effectively used radio and television for ministry and evangelism. It has taught the Body of Christ, as a whole, valuable lessons on the strengths and weaknesses of mass media for Christian witnessing. As with any human activity, there are biblical principles that must be observed as the Christian church uses the latest technology and media tools in order to minister to human needs. For many years the radio and television were the key methods of large-scale media ministry aimed at hitting large quantities of individuals with the hopes of being effective and transformative in substantial ways. The rise in cost for airtime in both markets has been, and will continue to remain a deterrent for many aspiring evangelists. Live streaming via the Internet is more cost efficient, and equally effective in our modern times. There remains some that utilize CDs and/or DVDs, however, the age of podcasts, YouTube, Streaming Faith, Live Stream and many other mediums both open the spectrum for greater accessibility, but narrows the return margin

for effectiveness. The margins for effectiveness are narrowed based on the intended target population that the media is designed to reach, but there are various methods to mitigate the risks of ineffectiveness and to implement a successful tool for ministry.

> Using the Internet in Media Ministry can be a successful tool to help tell the story of Jesus Christ. Closing the gap with the Internet can be a relatively simple process. Internet users can be asked certain information (at a minimum~ their ages) before they are permitted to log into a certain area. This information will help the pastor or members from the local church better plan for potential new members. The church can also create a chat room on the site where visitors are able to talk with others in the church congregation and around the world. This method will help with the spiritual growth of the potential members for the local church or any other congregation nearby. Developing a relationship with the pastor could be the deciding factor for some potential members.[8]

It is the position of this researcher that *virtual worship* should not be a replacement for corporate or *authentic* in-person worship. Virtual worship is simply a tool to safely connect or reconnect a community to the message of hope that distrusts the modern Christian church. There are virtual churches and worship services being held throughout the nation and world. Individuals can log on to a particular website from their personal computers or mobile device, and have an up close and personal worship experience in the comfort of their home, on the commuter train, in their office, in a classroom, break room or even on the beach while enjoying a vacation. Methods have been employed to allow individuals to pay tithes and tributes electronically from these aforementioned devices that credit the financial accounts of the respective church; and all the while, the individual is never required to move from her/his place of choice. It is the position of this project, and has been historically supported, that media ministry has and

[8] Brauder Gale Smith, *Media Ministry: 10 Keys to Success* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2011), 45.

will continue to provide an effective and transformative impact on vastly diverse communities, and it is suggested that low-income communities are included.

The context of this project is rooted in a culture of people who have either been misled, or misused for the greater successes of the economic engines and systems in current operation.

> Seemingly incongruous, ephemeral commercial culture functionally shelters the unchurched from confrontations with traditional religious culture by mimicking or "quoting" the deeper cultural values that often are resisted by the disbeliever as untranslatable or lacking currency in the present day. By this I [Badaracco] mean that the superficial, material, or ephemeral culture is a substitute for what many people seek and name as the deeper realities traditionally housed in religion.[9]

Many organizations, including the Christian church, have capitalized from the absence of the Christian message of hope. Its' absence has opened the door to a desperation or hunger to survive as opposed to an inspiration to live. The local Christian church has abandoned them out of fear or frustration with the process of discipleship, evangelism and home missions. Disappointment and mistrust has developed as a direct result of the poor's perceived betrayal and neglect. Their disbelief has shifted their focus from faith to entertainment, and the entertainment provided by mass media has become their conscience, their dreams, their imagination and inspiration. This has resulted in a community, whose morals and values are ever evolving, being based upon fiction rather than faith. The constant media presentations depicting attractive men and beautiful women holding alcoholic beverages and/or cigarettes smiling, and laughing conveys the message that the staged scene is the essence of true happiness and success. Replacing those messages with the messages of Christ, Faith, Forgiveness, The Gospel, Healing,

[9] Badaracco, 1.

Hope, Love and Salvation will tear down the barriers of denial, obstruction and restriction in order to set the captives free. The Christian church and its' leaders are centurions that should embrace the skills and tools of media ministry to employ them to reach, not rape, the less fortunate members of the global society and lift them out of destitution and despair into the true righteousness of God.

The Literature Review

Media Ministry: The Visual Perspective

Jason Bergund and Beverly West, in their book *Tvtherapy: The Television Guide to Life,* analyzed regular and specialized television programming to determine how they could be used as emotional, and mental healing agents for audiences. They highlight that the positive, subliminal messages encoded in each of the featured television shows assisted the viewer in performing a subconscious psychoanalysis upon themselves, and the individuals whom with they are in relationship. Taking into account that the community is detached from the Christian church [spirituality], they are led by their emotions and thoughts. Utilizing video media ministry reintroduced the spirituality to the community without reintroducing the distrusted agent [the Christian church]. This supported the transformative component of the researcher's premise that overt and subliminal messages impact the psyche. Ben Calvert, Neil Casey, Bernadette Casey, Liam French and Justin Lewis used content analysis of the of the programming vetted by the audience research of response, in their book *Television Studies: The Key Concepts,* as

methods for understanding the effects and impacts of media and television. This component is further detailed in Chapter Five's discussion of the field experience.

Many points of leverage throughout this research project, specifically relating to the implementation of the proposed treatment hypothesis, were supported from the literatures of Dr. Phil Cooke. He is a media consultant that specializes in Christian media, and media ministry development. Dr. Cooke's books *Successful Christian Television: Make Your Media Ministry A Reality (2003), Creative Christian Media: Secrets of Successful Media Ministry (2006), Branding Faith: Why Some Churches and Nonprofits Impact Culture and Others Don't (2008), The Last TV Evangelist: Why the Next Generation Couldn't Care Less About Religious Media (2009),* and *Unique: Telling Your Story in the Age of Brands and Social Media (2012)* laid the foundation for practical implementation. His writing served as the sounding board for focus, inspiration [starting the process], motivation [continuing the process] and vision.

> It's common knowledge that only a small portion of the audience for these television programs care enough to financially support the programs themselves, and includes people who watch these programs on a regular basis. Plus, research indicates that the vast majority of viewers of religious media are women, aged 55 or older.[10]

The researcher was required to compare the expert's [Cooke] position of the norm against the composition of the target population. Women aged 55 or older were less than three percent of the context. This translated into automatic failure of the project for the researcher prior to implementation. However, in order to validate that men and women aged 54 and younger suffer from hopelessness as a result of the absent Christian church, this information was used as a calculated risk. "Revolutions tend to have three stages.

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[10] Phil Cooke, *Successful Christian Television* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2003), 17-18.

The first is rooted primarily in spirit and emotion. The second wave occurs when the conquest has been made and the need for stability takes over. The third wave is one in which 'variety' begins to emerge out of the new and more stable order. No longer does everyone need to think alike, act alike, or feel alike in order for the new order to be effective or firmly grounded."[11] The variables of the context presented an opportunity to revolutionize the research of Christian media and its' audiences. The findings are detailed in Chapters Five and Six.

One of the major considerations that required mitigation for this research project was determining resources.

> Finances are a brick wall to many a would-be television ministry. Money, however, is a resource that you cannot do without. In sum, your initial key resource needs are:
>
> 1. **A studio** – *Or a place to produce the program.*
> 2. **A crew** – *The people who shoot and edit your program.*
> 3. **An audience** – *This is certainly an option, but I* [Cook] *find a good audience is helpful for a television novice.*
> 4. **Money** – *The financing to get your program on the air and to keep it on the air.*[12]

The researcher employed creative measures and techniques in order to reduce the generally expensive costs associated with starting a television ministry. This is not implying that the methods discounted the entire process to a level of comfortable affordability, but it was not as costly as projected. The requirements of finance, line and creative producers were addressed with workarounds. Set directors, camera operators and lighting technicians were engaged on a volunteer basis, which helped in reducing the cost of production. This process is detailed greater in Chapter Five.

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[11] Cooke, *Successful Christian Television*, 19.

[12] Ibid., 53-54.

Dr. Cooke addressed the requirements of being authentic, effective and relevant in *Creative Christian Media*. "It doesn't matter so much the program format – *preaching, music, documentary, variety, drama, whatever* – every program is telling some type of story, and until that story is told most effectively, the audience is never going to be interested."[13] He emphasized the importance of gaining an understanding of how the people's perception, being flexible to adjust approaches in order to connect and simply doing a good quality job. "Today, if we're going to make an impact in this culture for the gospel, we need to go far beyond self-esteem, good intentions, and confidence. We need intelligence, wisdom, and skill – that produces the kind of excellent work that stops the world in its tracks, and makes people want to know more about the God we worship."[14] The researcher adhered to the guidance of making the message of hope relevant to today. "Non-believers aren't looking for an 'old-fashioned' answer. They're looking for *today's* answer, and unless we can produce programs and events that portray our message as an answer for *today*, they'll never listen."[15] The process of ensuring relevancy and the results of it are detailed in Chapters Four and Six.

The researcher explored various avenues of connecting with the target population, and to techniques of maintaining a positive image with them. Dr. Cooke explains in *Branding Faith* the power of interest-grabbing stories can accomplish this task. "From the ancient days of the Israelite storytellers who recited the epic chronicles of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to the writers, preachers and filmmakers of today, we are a story-driven

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[13] Phil Cooke, *Creative Christian Media: Secrets of Successful Media Ministry* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2006), 22.

[14] Ibid., 75.

[15] Ibid., 103.

people, and we use stories to make sense of life."[16] Because of the context not being an organized Christian church, but a community of complex individuals, it was necessary to leverage information gathered via the pretest to determine the appropriate stories for the media tools. "Stories work because we want to experience the emotions, feelings and passions of others who have encountered the challenges we face each day."[17] These stories were methods to further build relationship between the target population and the message of hope. Throughout this process the message of hope became less representative of the Christian church, who was considered a violator to the community, and more representative to the media personality. The media personality was the one determined by the target population to have met them in their hour and place of need. This was the impression left within the community. "It's a matter of the brand story you want to leave in the mind of your audience, your church members or your supporters. Remember our original question in the introduction: *What do people think of when they think of you?"*[18] This process and its' results will be examined, and explained in greater detail in Chapters Five and Six.

Media Ministry: The Psychological Perspective

It has been stated, repeatedly, that the marginalized and oppressed distrust the modern Christian church. While a large percentage of this *distrust* is due to the actual behaviors of its' members, there is a percentage that is false due to mainstream media

[16] Phil Cooke, *Branding Faith: Why Some Churches and Nonprofits Impact Culture and Others Don't* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2008), 38-39.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid., 128.

influence. Karen Dill, in her book *How Fantasy Becomes Reality: Seeing Through Media Influence,* explores some of the main themes in American media culture. She assigns some of the responsibility of misidentification and improper perception within society to the negative portrayals of various groups within the media.

> It means that if you put out a positive image of a group (women or African American men, for example), this tends to cause positive thinking about that group. You are giving an example that this group can be really good. In contrast, if you put out a negative picture (literally) of a group, this causes people to evaluate unrelated members of that group more poorly. How the media portray members of the group can help or harm other members of that same group. For all those who thought that what we watch on our screens doesn't matter, that media are just entertainment and no matter what we see, it changes nothing, this study demonstrates that is not true. How you portray someone—be it by race, gender, religion, or any factor—makes a difference for other members of that same group. The reason is that you are telling a story about what members of that group are like. This causes people to think in ways that are consistent with the stereotype or the image that you brought up with your representation.[19]

It is the negative images of the Christian church that have increased the grave distrust of the poor against the Church. The researcher acknowledged this risk early in the process, and clearly discusses and details the outcomes in Chapter Five.

The position of this researcher has remained to connect, or reconnect the downtrodden and marginalized community with the message of hope. The foundational stance has been to address the spiritual needs of the community by engaging them through the logics of their mental capacities. Elizabeth M Perse discussed in her book, *Media Effects and Society,* how mass media has an active and direct role in shaping public opinion.

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[19] Karen Dill, *How Fantasy Becomes Reality: Seeing Through Media Influence* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), 186.

> The elaboration likelihood model (ELM) was formulated by Capioppo and Petty as a general theory of persuasion or attitude change. The ELM is based on several assumptions (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). The first is that people want to hold *correct attitudes*. Correct attitudes are those that have some underlying rationale. The second assumption is that, although people want to hold correct attitudes, people's capacity to process persuasive messages is limited. The ideal view of attitude formation is a mindful one, in which people pay attention to a message, learn its content, and yield to its suggestion (McGuire, 1985).[20]

It is the message of hope that possesses the opportunity to reshape the poor's opinion of Christ, and the modern Christian church. "Based on the two assumptions there are two general routes that mark people's mental strategies when they encounter persuasive messages: central and peripheral routes. Attitude change is the result of either of two major influences: the content of the message or the characteristics of the situation." [21] Perse also explored two models of learning from the media: active and passive. This researcher's position was to apply the *passive model* based on the assumption that [the target] audiences may be unable or unmotivated to acquire new information. "So, learning is based on media content that will attract the attention of these inactive audience members."[22]

Perse elaborated on the theoretical explanations for passive learning by explaining the orienting response to media. "The *orienting response* is an automatic response to stimuli in the environment that is associated with alertness, attention, and arousal. Certain media content features have the ability to stimulate this reaction. Changing visual images, flashing lights, visual complexity, cuts between scenes, camera movement, and object

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[20] Elizabeth M. Perse, *Media Effects and Society* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), 85-86.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid., 145.

movement on the screen toward the viewer have all been associated with orienting responses in television viewing."[23] Equally, Robert Abelman and David J. Atkin detailed the relevance in making the viewing experience attention-grabbing via the editing process in their book *The Televiewing Audience: The Art and Science of Watching TV.* "Editing requires the viewer to accept the possibility of disembodied shifts in point of view: that is, the viewer is provided with many different and frequently shifting visual views of an action that are physically impossible to achieve in real life but are an integral part of TV's narrative structure."[24] Having taken into consideration that the historical data revealed that the majority of the target population would not watch religious programing, the suggestions of Perse, Adelman and Atkins were applied. The researcher applied these concepts of theory during the implementation, and will explain in greater detail in Chapter Five.

David Giles wrote in *Media Psychology* about the effects of prosocial media, and the role of media figures during adolescence. He discussed how the majority of research conducted examined the impacts of negative media as it relates to violence. "Whereas, studies of media and *anti*social behavior have concentrated on aggression and violence, studies of prosocial behavior have been more diverse. Prosocial behavior may be explicit; the most heavily researched behavior is *altruism,* or helping (typically, going to the aid of another person in difficulty or distress)."[25] This researcher focused this project on the premise that media could produce altruistic result. Giles supported the theory that people,

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[23] Perse, 149.

[24] Robert Abelman and David J. Atkin, *The Televiewing Audience: The Art and Science of Watching TV* (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2002), 67.

[25] David Giles, *Media Psychology* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2003), 75.

generally, want to be good which translates into them being in search for hope. The more exposure to positive media the greater the altruistic impact. Giles also investigated the role of media figures during adolescence considering the fact that they generally spend a lot of time in isolation, and watching television. "Traditionally, adolescence is a period when children seek out figures from beyond their immediate social environment who can act as heroes, idols, or role models."[26] This position is explored in greater detail in Chapters Five and Six.

In further solidifying a strong foundation for understanding the psychological perspective of media ministry the researcher investigated the spiritual angles. David G. Myers used *The American Paradox: Spiritual Hunger in an Age of Plenty* to dissect individualism and community; media, minds and the public good; and faith and society. He examined the uniqueness of urban and rural areas through socialization, and determined a cultural shift from community to individualism.

> Urban settings, which offer the widest cultural buffet, nurture more individualism than rural settings. In rural settings, where one will again see people for whom one does favors, "reciprocal altruism" runs stronger. The giver can expect later to be the getter. Compared with urbanites, small-town and rural folk are more willing to relay a phone message, mail "lost" letters, cooperate with survey interviewers, help a lost child, and do small favors. As human cultures have moved from hunting-gathering to agriculture to industrialization-urbanization, individualism has replaced communalism.[27]

This shift was not limited to the unchurched, because modern Christian church members live in the same community as those considered unchurched. It is the position of this researcher that individualism that grew in the community infiltrated the Christian church,

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[26] Giles, 153.

[27] David G. Myers, *The American Paradox: Spiritual Hunger in an Age of Plenty* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 174.

and shifted its' focus from communal to individualism as well. This is where the church gained the concept "Come to us" as mission work. Individualism causes one to think that the individual is more important than the whole [community]. However, Christ commanded His disciples to be communal in Matthew 28:19 to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."[28] This command instructed communal activism without restrictions or schisms. It was how Christ intended for the church to be built and sustained. Unfortunately, as the Christian church has become less visible the message of hope has become less accessible, resulting in an individualistic community. "Additionally, a scientific consensus has emerged: across time and across people, watching violence predicts aggression. In 1993, the American Psychological Association's Commission on Violence and Youth declared that there is now 'absolutely no doubt that higher levels of viewing violence on television are correlated with increased acceptance of aggressive attitudes and increased aggressive behavior.'"[29] In contrast it is this researcher's position that just as exposure to violence produces aggressive attitudes and behaviors, then, equally, the exposure to positive, spiritual programming will produce hopeful, resilient attitudes and behaviors. This theory is explored in greater detail in Chapter Four.

Media Ministry: The Conclusion

Media is a tool advantageously used by society to communicate concepts, ideas and theories. If it is engaged properly and with exceptional quality the positive impacts will be equal to, or greater than the results of the negative engagements. The Christian

[28] Matthew 28:19.

[29] Myers, 208.

church, through actions of its' own, has been blockaded from the hearts and minds of the downtrodden, marginalized, oppressed and poor. However, the message of hope is still needed in order to altruistically lift them from poverty to progressive sustainment. The employment of media ministry is the tool to connect or reconnect the economically oppressed with the message of hope. It is believed that this process will prove effective, supported by positive changes in attitudes; and transformative, supported by positive changes in behaviors. This research intends to validate these hypotheses.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Biblical Foundations

The researcher focused on an Old Testament text in the Book of Isaiah. The Book of Isaiah, also referred to as "The Book of Salvation", is predicated on the tenets that the name Isaiah means "the salvation of the LORD," or "the LORD is salvation." Isaiah, considered one of the "Major Prophets" of the Bible, pens the first book in the Bible that contained the writings of one of the prophets, hence he is called the Prince of Prophets. His mastery language, rich and vast vocabulary, and poetic skills have earned him the title, "Shakespeare of the Bible." Isaiah was educated, distinguished, and privileged, yet he is most recognized as being a deeply spiritual man committed to the obedience of God over the long haul of his 55-60 year ministry. His calling as a prophet was primarily to the nation of Judah [the southern kingdom], and to Jerusalem. He urged the people to repent from their sins and return to God. He also foretold the coming of the Messiah, and the salvation of the Lord. Many of his prophesies were predicted events that occurred in Isaiah's own near future. At that time they [the prophesies] foretold events of the distant future such as the coming of the Messiah, and events that were still to come in the last days such as the second coming of Christ.

The Book of Isaiah is a collection of oracles, prophecies and reports; but the common theme is the message of salvation. According to the text, there was no hope in anything that was made by people. The northern kingdom of Israel had been carried into captivity (722 B.C.), and the southern kingdom [the kingdom of Judah] was in the middle of practicing idolatry and evil works. The kingdom of Assyria dominated the Fertile Crescent and posed a major threat to both northern and southern kingdoms. Then, the kingdom of Babylon gained power, and replaced Assyria as the dominant threat. Before the nation could inherit the promises made to their forefathers it [Israel] had to be made holy before the presence of God. God used pagan nations to chasten Israel for its' sins, and to cleanse it from iniquity. "The judgment of the captives punished sin and destroyed the wicked unbelievers; however, the complete removal of iniquity would ultimately be the work of the Servant of the Lord, the promised Messiah, Jesus The Christ. On the basis of such cleansing and purification, God would then establish the golden age, a time of peace and prosperity that the world has never known. When The Holy God would make the remnant holy, then He would use them to rule over the nations rather than allow the nations again to discipline them."[1]

The setting of the first half of the book was Judah in the days of the Assyrians. The setting of the second half of the book was Babylon, then Jerusalem, and then beyond in the age to come. The targeted audience in the first half of the book was pre-exilic Israel. The targeted audience in the second half of the book was Israel during the exile, and at the return. In both parts the oracles often look to the distant future for their main meaning and application. The fact that each section included vivid descriptions as well as

[1] Brian E. Beyer, *Encountering the Book of Isaiah: A Historical and Theological Survey* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Company, 2007), 198.

general and poetic descriptions has fueled controversy about the unity of the book and the prophet himself.

The key focus related to the Book of Isaiah was to meet the people in their respective place. It [the scripture] served as a foundation to build this project upon. The focus text is located in a section of the Book of Isaiah known as "The Book of Comfort: The Program of Peace."

> It addressed the perspective of hope while the circumstances of Jerusalem turned around from a period of idolatry under King Ahaz to reconnection with the GOD under King Hezekiah. It was during this time that the economy changed to one of growth and prosperity, and the security of the southern kingdom and Jerusalem became enhanced due to the collective faith of the people redirected back into GOD.[2]

It was at this turning point that the Prophet Isaiah proclaimed: "Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn."[3] The Lord reestablished covenant with Israel by declaring that His Spirit and Word would remain with them permanently. This unconditional covenant with God infused great hope into the people of the southern kingdom, and all of Jerusalem.

King Hezekiah utilized the influence of his position to evangelize to the people who had lost all hope and confidence in faith, and initiated a spiritual reformation. The medium to spread the inspirational news was oral communications. The disenfranchised

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[2] John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66: New International Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 284.

[3] Isaiah 60:1-3.

and hopeless were able to receive, and experience life-altering opportunities as a result of the establishment, or reestablishment of covenant relationship with God. King Hezekiah sent the Word of God into the businesses, homes, market places and social gathering places with the intent of making an impact for mental and spiritual transformation. The evidence of its' [evangelistic initiative] effectiveness and transformativeness was found in the changes in his kingdom [community]. This passage supports the hypothesis that low-income, disenfranchised and marginalized individuals are more receptive to the Word of God when it is given to them within their own context. It affords them the opportunity to receive, digest, comprehend and apply it on their own terms. This results in relationships being established with the Word of God that is presented, and the messenger presenting it. Hope is received, and transformation can take place.

The Lord instructed the people in Verse 1 to "Arise." The intent of this command served as a requirement for execution, and as a word of encouragement. God desired Israel to improve their disenfranchised posture to a different one of determination, and forward progression. God wanted them to be in a greater position of living. "According to the Hebrew style lying down was described as being in a servile and calamitous condition. So, by rising, or standing up, a recovery out of a dismal posture and position was being ordained in order to place the people into a free and prosperous one."[4] This served as a manifested indication that true deliverance for Jerusalem was at hand by the Order of God. Jerusalem's restoration gathered momentum and continued to be displayed by the flourished state of the Gentile church, under the coming Messiah. Isaiah addressed the coming Zion. "Zion's light will have come and filled and transformed Zion. Thus,

[4] Beyer, 221.

Zion can respond to the command to rise and shine, or give off light to others."[5] The "Arise, shine;" is the instructional prompting of God to His People to reposition themselves for advancement, and to share this advancement with others through evangelism. There were prompted to "shine" or began expressing their true authority, confidence, gifts and skills for their own betterment. This evolved into the message of faith to the non-believers in the God of Israel. It served as a testament that regardless of the chaos happening around them that God continued great work in those who attach expectations to their faith. The Lord did not solicit individuals to assemble in the synagogue or temple. However, they were instructed to pass on the message of faith to other individuals immediately after they have repositioned themselves.

The continuation of Verse one provided the rationale and/or reason for the people to be motivated to stand up, and share their deliverance with others. It spoke to the current aid, direction, encouragement and salvation that was available to them. It stated, "for your light has come and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you." This did not speak to the "coming Messiah" because the language was past tense. It related to the factual transition from King Ahaz's position on theology and worship to the faithful and honorable position of King Hezekiah. The conscious decision of King Hezekiah to restore the relationship between Jerusalem and God prompted God to bestow empowered favor upon them. The "light" represented the actual salvation present in the natural, physical lives Israel. This made them greater, more prosperous and stronger as a result of the Word of the Lord given while in relationship with God. It is the direct connection to the source of hope [God] that has the ability to produce quantifiable changes within

[5] Stanley M. Horton and Mark A. Phelps, *The Complete Biblical Library: The Old Testament* (Springfield: World Library Press, 1995), 463.

impoverished individuals that result in changes within impoverished communities. Isaiah personalized the message of hope from God to the people as confirmation that God was with them, and had worked on their behalf. “The glory of the LORD *has risen upon you*” translated that God and God’s Favor increased in their lives alone. This favor did not apply to their oppressors or to anyone whom did not have relationship with the God of Israel.

Verse two to elaborated on the justification to eliminate excuses, or reasons for returning to idolatry. The Lord conveyed “For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples.” Idolatry would remain in Jerusalem, and completely cover the earth as well as the people. The darkness signified that the world would operate in utter stupidity, or complete ignorance. However, “the LORD will arise upon you and His glory will appear over you.” God allowed the sins and violations to remain a part of everyday life. But, for the individuals who chose to acknowledge, adhere and apply the relational communication with God, God covered, and exempted them from the effects of the unrighteousness.

The focus text concluded in Verse three “Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.” This prophetic indication provided expectancy to the people, and would come as a result of their relationship with Him, faithfulness unto Him and evangelistic obedience for Him. Their reestablished covenant with GOD would yield deliverance, growth and prosperity for a unified Jerusalem, the southern Kingdom, the Northern Kingdom and Israel as a whole. It would cause other “nations” to come to the LORD, and kings to the presence of God that was upon the people. Interpretively, everyone desires to advance and prosper. Individuals awake and arise daily from their

personal spaces, and venture outside of their comfort zones in order to come into contact with greater opportunities that will enhance and/or improve their quality of life. One leader, King Hezekiah, utilized the influence of his position as the king to reach out to people who had lost all hope and confidence in the God of Israel [because they worshipped idols], which spawned a spiritual reformation.

The message of hope that was issued communicated that disenfranchised, hopeless people could experience life-altering opportunities with the establishment, or reestablishment of a direct relationship with God. King Hezekiah sent the Word of God into businesses, homes, market places and social gathering places via the media tool of spoken communication [audio media]. His efforts created an impact so great that a spiritual transformation took place that led to a mental and physical transformation. This foundational text targeted their psyche, which prompted an attitudinal [effective] and spiritual [transformative] change. This passage supports the hypothesis that low-income, disenfranchised and marginalized individuals are more receptive to the Word of God when it is given within their own context. It affords the opportunities to receive it, digest it, comprehend it and apply it on their own terms. Hence relationship can be established with the Word that is presented, the God of the Word that is presented and the messenger of the God of the Word that is presented. It is through this process that individuals can enhance their transformative process by leaving their private worship areas, and entering into corporate worship areas.

The New Testament passage came from the Gospel of John. The Gospels are the first four books of the New Testament, and tell the story of the life of Jesus Christ. However, only the Gospel of John claimed to be an eyewitness' account, or the testimony

of the unnamed "disciple whom Jesus loved." "This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true."[6] Authorship of the Gospel of John remains an unanswered question, however, noted theologians throughout the ages have maintained that it was indeed the disciple John who penned this famous Biblical book. It has been closely examined by some of the most famous theologians in history who have underscored its importance from as early as the beginning of the third century. "It is believed that Origen, an Alexandrian Christian scholar and theologian, wrote his Gospel of John commentary while in Alexandria at some point after 218 A.D. St. Augustine, a famous fourth century church father, contributed no fewer than 124 tractates in his Gospel of John commentary, while St. Thomas Aquinas' Gospel of John commentary of the 13th century is still highly regarded today by modern scholars."[7]

It may never become known for certain who wrote the Gospel of John, any more than it is known currently who authored the books of Matthew, Mark and Luke. However, it is known that the Gospel of John is a gospel apart from the others due to them [Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke] being so alike in their accounts. They are called the Synoptic Gospels—meaning "seen together"—because the parallels are very clear when they are examined side by side. Matthew and Luke follow the version of events in Mark, which is thought by scholars to be the earliest and most historically accurate Gospel. John, however, does not include the same incidents or chronology found

[6] St. John 21:24.

[7] Frederick Dale Bruner, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary.* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012), 146.

in the other three Gospels. The fact that it is so different has spurred a debate over whether John's Gospel is historical or not.

There is not a definitive date in which the Gospel of John was written. There are two views concerning the date of John's Gospel to consider here: First, the long-established view places the writing of John around A.D. 85 or later. A statement from Clement of Alexandria that indicated John wrote to supplement the other Gospel accounts reinforces this view. It also puts his writings in the later segment of the first-century retaining in consideration that the other Gospel writers wrote prior to A.D. 70. Recently, interpreters have suggested a timeframe between A.D. 50 – A.D. 70 for authorship. This does not combat Clement's position, nor call into question the more expounded theology of John in comparison to the other Gospels as validation for a later date. For example, the theology of Romans is very formed; yet it is dated around A.D. 57. Lastly, awareness should be given to the scripture located in John 5, "[1]After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. [2] Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, call in Hebrew Beth-zatha, which has give porticoes. [3] In these lay many invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. [5] One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years."[8] John used "is" instead of "was" concerning the pool near the Sheep Gate. Additionally, he wrote "In these lay" instead of "In those laid" referencing the five porticoes, and the invalids. This may suggest a time before A.D. 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed.

The narrative and theological distinctiveness of John from the Synoptics leads many scholars to consider not just *why* John was written, but why it was written *so differently*. Outside of the passion narratives, there are remarkably few common events with the Synoptics. This suggests that he was aware of the other three and deliberately

[8] John 5:1-5.

wrote a complementary Gospel to add extra information and reflection rather than reiterate the existing content. Eusebius of Caesarea (circa 275 to 339) was bishop of Caesarea in Palestine and is often referred to as the father of church history because of his work in recording the history of the early Christian church. He quotes Clement stating something similar:

But, last of all, John, perceiving that the external facts had been made plain in the Gospel, being urged by his friends, and inspired by the Spirit, composed a spiritual Gospel. John 7:42 gives an interesting addition to this theory. The crowds are clearly expecting the Messiah to have come from Bethlehem, which is founded in scripture (Micah 5:2). However, John does not clarify the fact that Jesus did indeed come from Bethlehem. It is quite possible that John expected his readers to know this fact, and to understand the irony of the crowd's deliberation. This suggests that John was writing pastorally to existing Christians, to keep them strong in their faith.

Chapters 13-17 also support the theory that John wrote to Christians. The "upper room discourse" is a pastoral speech to people who follow Jesus. They are described as branches coming from him, and as being united with him as he is to God (John 15:1-17). They are also called to self-sacrificial love for each other and obedience to Jesus' commands (John 13:33-34; 14:12, 15, 21-24; 15:10-17). Thirdly, Jesus warns them of the persecutions that they will face once he leaves (his death, resurrection and ascension) and encourages them to stand firm in the faith throughout them (John 15:18-23; 16:1-4). Finally he promises them the support of the Holy Spirit who will comfort and guide them in their persecution, and will teach them and lead them into all truth concerning Jesus

(John 14:15-27; 16:5-15). This extensive passage seems to be directed to pastoral care for existing Christians who are currently, or about to face persecution.

However, there is also support for the theory that John was an evangelistic book. The Gospel has a very strong theme of judgment and witness, which is highlighted by the many characters (including "the crowds") who are considering who Jesus is. As the Gospel narrative develops, there are many witnesses to who Jesus is, and many people choose to follow Jesus while many others choose to reject him. "This is highlighted by the court cases where Jesus is unjustly condemned, and by his resurrection, which vindicates him – and vindicates all the people who chose to follow him. However, through the Gospel, the theme of judging Jesus is constantly subverted as Jesus proclaims that he is the Judge (or that his Word is the Judge). This shows that, rather than judging about Jesus, the people are judged based on their decision about Jesus. Those who follow him are vindicated while those who reject him are judged."[9] This shows a very strong evangelistic edge to the gospel. Even though parts of the Gospel seem to be clearly written with Christians in mind, any account of who Jesus is acts as an evangelistic tool. It is important to note that the most quoted and translated evangelistic passage in history (John 3:16) comes from this Gospel.

Other parts of the gospel raise the question of what secondary purposes the Gospel may intend to fulfill. The first part of the Gospel has an unusually large focus on the shift from John the Baptist to Jesus, as John's disciples and followers leave him to follow Jesus. The Baptist's statement in John 3:30 is the pinnacle of a theme introduced in the Prologue that John is not the Messiah, simply a witness to him (John 1:8, 19, 27).

[9] Herman Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John: A Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 274.

This raises the possibility that John the Evangelist was aware of some form of "Baptist cult" and was deliberately targeting it as part of his purpose in writing the Gospel. Equally, part of the final chapter seems interested in explaining why a rumor, that the "disciple whom Jesus loved" would not die, is not true (John 21:22-23).

The researcher focused on the New Testament text in St. John: "Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth. I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me."[10] Jesus' conversation with GOD served as a testimony to His faithfulness and obedience to, and relationship with The Divine Will of God. He interceded for His disciples as a preparatory method for the forthcoming betrayal, trial, punishment and crucifixion. Jesus petitioned His Father to protect and strengthen them on His behalf, so that they may remain unified in their actions and lives.

The disposition of unity and message of hope carried by the Disciples of Christ served to be important to the disenfranchised and marginalized in helping them to receive hope for their future. The scripture detailed that the risk of a divided medium and/or message would result in detriment to the Kingdom of God. It signified that an absence of unity is also an absence of hope. Jesus taught that the unified message that He instructed the disciples to teach gave the world the understanding that He was sent by God to them. As a result, Jesus has sent forth the disciples [the medium] to convey the unadulterated truth, which is the Word of God. Any disconnect within this process or the transferal of

[10] St. John 17:17-21.

information from any component in this link would result in the loss of converted souls to, and relationship with God. The display of division alerts the world that the messenger [medium] is not in relationship with God [transmitter]. The modern Christian church has been recognized as not being unified in its' actions and message, and the downtrodden has concluded that it is disconnected from God.

"Jesus asserted that the effectiveness of the messenger is predicated on the believers' oneness [unity] with one another. That oneness is only viable by possessing oneness in the Father [God] through the Son [Jesus Christ]. The one true God reveals himself savingly only in the Son, who can reveal God and communicate eternal life only because he is one with the Father. The unique and exclusive divinity of the only God can be revealed savingly in Jesus only because Jesus participates uniquely and exclusively in that divinity."[11] The messenger cannot speak as a representative of God, or God's abilities without having a personal, unified relationship with Jesus Christ. This is the spiritual oneness that comes from God, and it defines how the Christian church should live together in the world. "When the church comes to accept the social order and to see the structures of the social order (such as political authority) as a means of furthering the church and expressing church concerns, then ethics are derived more from the social order than the specific narrative of Jesus."[12] Jesus' prayer confirmed that there can be no oneness apart from him, yet Christians disagree on who Jesus is and how one is to relate to him. This oneness must come from God not by the goodwill of people. It can only

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[11] Richard Bauckham, *Contours of Christology in the New Testament,* ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), 165.

[12] J. Denny Weaver, *The Nonviolent Atonement* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), 90.

come through being born from above [the spirit] by adhering to the voice of the Good Shepherd [Jesus Christ], and accepting the witness of the Paraclete [Holy Spirit], thereby accepting the Truth of God, which is His Word.

Historical Foundation

Media has served as an effective tool to reach audiences for centuries. It is not limited to the modern misconceptions of digital recordings, radio and television, but media is much more broad. Media is defined as the main means of mass communication (especially television, radio, newspaper and the Internet) and comes from the plural Latin translation of *Medium*.[13] Medium is defined as an agency or means of doing something; a means by which something is communicated or expressed.[14] Mass communication is a viable means of transferring information from one person to another, and from one location to another. It can be traced back as far as 3,300 B.C. when it is believed that the ancient Egyptians perfected hieroglyphics, transitioning to the Semitic development of the alphabet in 1,500 B.C., and being enhanced further by the Egyptian's early form of paper through the usage of papyrus in 1,000 B.C. Mass communication evolved with the Chinese development of separate, movable characters for printing in A.D. 1041, Johannes Gutenberg's movable type printing press in Germany in A.D. 1446, and William Caxton's book production in England with the first printed advertisement in A.D. 1468. Mass Communication took a cultural, and more specific leap in 1827 during the start of

[13] Oxford Dictionaries Online, "Media," (accessed April 19, 2013) http://oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/media.

[14] Ibid. "Medium."

the Industrial Revolution. Peter Williams, Jr. and other freed black men in New York City published and distributed the first African-American newspaper *Freedom's Journal*. Their target audience was the 300,000 free blacks in the United States who were considered "free" after the American Revolutionary War.

The 1950s brought black-and-white televisions into the average American home. The 1960s brought the rise of Frequency Modulation (FM) radio, stereo recordings and playback equipment, and the Telstar I satellite telephone and television signals. The 1970s birthed the Video Cassette Recorder (VCR), and the Home Box Office (HBO) cable network uplink to satellite in 1975. The 1980s advanced mass communications and media to fiber-optic cable, hypertext links to the World Wide Web, and Compact Discs (CDs). The 1990s generated the rise of talk radio, direct broadcast satellite services, and the live Internet streaming capability with William Jefferson Clinton's Presidential Inauguration. The replacement of Video Home System (VHS) cassettes by Digital Video Discs (DVDs) took place in 1997. The new millennium created the explosion of cell phone usage and cellular technology. Specifically, 2001 launched Instant Messaging Services (IMS), iPod and MP3 digital files along with the immediate report communication of the 9/11 attacks via multimedia tools. Satellite radio was launched in 2002, and Broadband Internet Services was installed in more than fifty percent of American homes by 2004. Citizen Journalists are noted for recording and transmitting events on cellular cameras and technology in 2006, and the Presidential debates were viewable on YouTube in 2007.

"The evolution of communicative mediums, purposes and styles has forced our societies to be more open to the varieties of information transmitted, as well as the vast difference in the information consider and sought after."[15]

There are two biblical figures that historically standout in regards to utilizing media ministry for its' effective and transformative abilities: Jesus Christ and the Apostle Paul. They, both, respectfully implemented ministries that were targeted at specific population segments, and were successful in their implementation processes. The uniqueness of Jesus' media ministry was His target audience. He targeted the poor and downtrodden of Israel, which is confirmed by His earthly employment as a carpenter. This occupation provided Christ with an environmental understanding of the low-income communities' circumstances, feelings, lives and needs. He was able to tailor His message of hope in order to connect with the people wherever they were at the time. The vernacular of Christ coupled with the media of His message resonated with the thousands upon thousands of individuals that were reached, and resulted in the transformation of communities, regions and nations for the Kingdom of God. This concept aligns with the initial premise of this project that individuals are more receptive to initial, spiritual enrichment presented within their comfort/private areas.

The media ministry of the Apostle Paul would appear to be larger, more effective and transformative than Jesus'; except, Paul continued with the actual work that Christ began. He upgraded the medium used by Christ [Christ used oration as His medium] in order to evangelize. Paul made it more effective and secure by writing letters [print medium] to the various leaders in the areas of his target audience. This was different from

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[15] Terrance P. Moran, *Introduction to the History of Communication* (New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing, 2010), 314.

the methods of Christ as He always sent individuals out with a message to carry via word of mouth [audio media]. Paul's institution of epistles or letters [print media] produced historical artifacts to be passed down through generations, and clearly stated his audience, intentions, instructions and expected outcomes. This form of media ministry enhanced the effectiveness of Paul's ministry by eliminating the second or third hand interpretations usually involved in verbally transmitted information. Through the media tool of epistles it simply required individuals in receipt of Paul's writing to read to the target population the purposed message. While it required more time than the former media method to create and distribute, it did afford the message to continue to be heard even while Paul was incarcerated and not physically present.

Annotated Literature Review

There have been a total of two hundred and forty-two literary sources reviewed in relationship to this project to date. Unfortunately, there is not available specific literary research or sources directly related to the focus of this project. A large amount has been discovered on the historical reviews of media, liberation theology, faith and technology, and biblical reviews of the foundational scriptures upon which this project is built. The numerous sources researched conveyed a clear understanding that traditional ministry is changing drastically, and evolving into an electronic and mobile ministry. "The present generation or the 'net generation' is the wave of society that is internet/web-savvy young people that desire Christ, but do not seek Christ through traditional channels."[16] The

[16] Andrew Careaga, *eMinistry: Connecting with the Net Generation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2001), 47.

cultural changes are displaying that the modern community of faith are utilizing the technology of this age in order to access the message of hope, and inspiration for today. This opens a portal to be able to attend, support and worship within any ministry context, nationally or globally, without physically being present. "Numerous ministries are advancing forward and quickly by employing methods that are web-based. Websites, interactive multimedia inclusive of online video, podcasting and online streaming, eCommerce, Social Media and Mobile/Cellular devices are tools that are reaching, normally, unreachable members of society who have disconnected or refuse traditional-styled worship."[17]

"Spiritual or Christian television has been around for many decades, and has been responsible for reaching and saving millions of people due to the development of an effective, high quality television program for the sharing of the message of Christ."[18] Studies have been conducted to determine the influence that media and television presents upon the general public.

> The various aspects of television studies address: the theoretical perspectives of Marxism, semiology and feminism as influences; the narrative, representative and bias concepts; soap operas, news and science fiction as genres; content analysis and audience response as methods used for understanding television; and relevant social, economic and political phenomena associated ownership and social policy as variable impacts and influences on television.[19]

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[17] Jason Caston, *The iChurch Method: How to Advance Your Ministry Online* (Frisco, TX: Caston Digital, LLC., 2012), 8.

[18] Cooke, *Successful Christian Television*, 83.

[19] Ben Calvert, Neil Casey, Bernadette Casey, Liam French and Justin Lewis, *Television Studies: The Key Concepts* (New York, NY: Routledge Publishing, 2008), 49.

However, there are groups who believe that the future generations are so far detached, and removed from the spirituality of Christianity that a decline has taken place. "The Christian media has been called into question regarding some of the philosophies, attitudes, and behaviors that need to change if Christian media is going to be a thriving part of this contemporary culture. The bad, stupid and pointless media is reflecting negatively on the traditional, religious, effective Christian media and poses a serious threat to the future effectiveness of this tool."[20] This research expanded the literature review to include impacts of media, effects of media on low-income communities, and detailed some of the causes related to social changes within this community.

Theological Foundation

This project is rooted in Liberation Theology, and explores the culture of people who have either been misled, or misused in favor of the economic, political and social systems that are currently in operation. Liberation theology is defined as one of the "contextual theologies focusing on the issues of oppression and discrimination in its particular context. [It] insists on the need to promote and practice justice and love, not only at the personal level, but also in societal practices and structures."[21]

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[20] Phil Cooke, *The Last TV Evangelist: Why the Next Generation Couldn't Care Less About Religious Media* (Huntington Beach, CA: Conversant Media Group, 2009), 117.

[21] Justo L. González, *Essential Theological Terms* (Louisville, KY: Westminister John Knox Press, 2005), 100.

Liberation Theology empowers the disenfranchised and downtrodden with the knowledge of hope and understanding. It defeats ignorance and connects with the poor within their context, and at their pace.

> At this point it is important to point out that liberation theologies are not part of a spectrum that goes from conservative to liberal to liberation. Sometimes, liberation theologians find that those who have most difficulty in understanding them are not those who call themselves "conservative", but those who claim to be "liberal." There are many reasons for this, but at least two must be mentioned in this context. The first of these is that much of liberal theology, in spite of its claim to universality and openness, developed as the theological expression of the experience and interests of males in the growing middle classes in the North Atlantic, particularly during the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth. These ties with a particular segment of the human community, particularly when they remain hidden, make it difficult for liberal theologians. What is typical of liberal theology is the notion that the value of Scripture lies in the fact that it points to certain essential principles, and that theology then seeks to interpret Scripture so as to find them. A typical case is the famous liberal theology summary of the message of the Sermon on the Mount as the "Fatherhood of God, brotherhood of man, and the infinite value of the human soul." Even updated to avoid gender-specific language, this sort of summary, in its aim to be universal, lacks historical specificity. In our own day, psychological principles are often used for the same purpose. Secondly, liberal theology often lacks a strong sense of the Word of God, which comes from beyond the present order. This is partly because liberal theology tends to agree with the "best" of society around it, and therefore does not require such a Word. Liberation theologies, on the other hand, societies, and therefore for them the notion of such a Word of God is crucial. In this regard, liberation theologians sometimes find that the "conservatives" are closer to them than are the "liberals."[22]

Many theologians believe that liberation theology advocates for the Christian church to develop its' validity and spirituality by growing out of the poor. The continued posture is that the Bible should be read, and experienced from the perspectives of the

[22] Justo L. González & Catherine G. González, *The Liberating Pulpit* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994), 24.

poor. "The Christian church should be a crusade for those who were denied their rights and thrust into such poverty that they were, unjustly, deprived of their full status as human beings. Liberation must be conceived not as being for the poor alone, but as being for all, beginning with the very poorest and in the universalistic outlook of the poor."[23] The poor should take the example of Jesus for empowerment, and use it to bring about an equal society. There are supportive, liberation theologians that have undertaken the doctrinal stance that interpret the scholastic disposition of the Trinity as a model for co-operative and non-hierarchical development among humans.

Liberationists agree that the Christian church should fight and serve to bring about social change. They believe that the Church should align itself with the disenfranchised and marginalized, or the lower, working class in order to be considered legitimate in accomplishing this allegiance. Historically, radical pastors and priests have become involved in politics and trade unions, and others aligned themselves with violent, revolutionary movements. They displayed their camaraderie with the poor by relocating themselves and their families from convents, parsonages or religious houses into poverty stricken areas to share the living conditions of their parishioners. This methodology proved effective in some regards, but ineffective in others. It was effective in gaining the followership and partnership of community leaders, because it clarified their sacerdotal commitments, and validated their community commitments. In other ways it was ineffective, because while the Christian message of hope was proclaimed with more conviction the congregants measured the validity of the message based on the

[23] Leonardo Boff, *New Evangelism: Good News to the Poor* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 50.

advancements or changes in their leadership's personal conditions; happenstance, the congregants and leaders all wrestled with the same conditions.

Theology has been interpreted from the viewpoint of those who are normally considered the weak or powerless. In challenging the traditional understandings of the Christian message of hope, this researcher investigated the perspectives of a few liberation theologians. These individuals have taken a stance of refusal to bequeath the gospel to those deemed to be the powerful, which use the gospel to retain authority and remain oppressive instead of empowerment and liberation. Examples of this cadre of theologians are: Francis of Assisi, Edward Bellamy, Margaret Wedgewood Benn, Daniel and Phillip Berrigan, Phillip Berryman, James Cone, Katie Cannon, Mary Daly, Dorothy Day, Cane Hope Felder, Floyd Flake, Jacquelyn Grant, Gustavo Gutierrez, Justo and Catherine González, H. Beecher Hicks, Jr., Martin Luther King, Jr., Reinhold Niebuhr, Oscar Romero, Rosemary Radford Ruether, Paul Tillich, Alice Walker, Cornell West, Delores Williams and Jeremiah Wright, Jr.

> Liberation theology is a Roman Catholic movement that originated in the late 20th century in Latin America created to express religious tenants of faith by helping the poor, and working for political and social change. It began in 1968, when bishops attending the Latin American Bishops' Conference in Medellín, Colombia, affirmed the rights of the poor and asserted that industrialized nations were enriching themselves at the expense of the lesser developed Third World Countries. It explores the relationship between Christian theology, social justice, poverty and human rights. The main vantage point of liberation theology is to display theology from the viewpoint of the economically poor and oppressed of the human community. In fact, liberation theology is an interpretation of Christian faith out the experience of the poor. It is an attempt to read the Bible and key Christian doctrines with the eyes of the poor.[24]

[24] Phillip Berryman, *Liberation Theology: Essential Facts About The Revolutionary Movement In Latin America – And Beyond* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1987), 4.

Theologically, beginning in the Book of Genesis and traversing through the Book of Revelation, it is this researcher's stance that God functioned, and operated on behalf of the oppressed and poor. The creation of the Garden of Eden symbolized a liberative initiative by God to lift humanity from the destructive attacks of Satan, and his agenda of oppression. "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.'"[25] It is the knowledge that an option not to progress exists that produces complacency, and eventual oppression. There must be the employment of an instrument to inspire the less fortunate to commit to a school of thought different from their environment. The intentions of God is that humanity operate in equal spiritual authority, knowledge and power based on their faith. The violation of humanity's faith in God, in the Garden of Eden, resulted in a questionable relationship with God. It resulted in humanity being oppressed.

> What is the action that will effectively enable the oppressed to move out of their inhuman situation? Many years of reflection and practice suggests that it has to go beyond two approaches that have already been tried: aid and reformism. "Aid" is help offered by individuals moved by the spectacle of widespread destitution. They form agencies and organize projects: the "Band-Aid" or "corn-plaster" approach to social ills. But, however perceptive they become and however well-intentioned–and successful–aid remains a strategy for helping the poor, but treating them as (collective) objects of charity, not as subjects of their own liberation.[26]

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[25] Genesis 2:15-17.

[26] Leonardo Boff and Clodovis Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987), 4.

Reformism is the principle that gradual change through and within the existing institutions of a society can ultimately change the fundamental, economic relations, systems and political structures of that society. The notion is to infiltrate a community with socially and spiritually conscious individuals who are equipped with knowledge of transformation. These individuals slowly edge out and replace the oppressed, and traditional matriarchs and patriarchs of that community. It will take a much longer time via this process for true acknowledgeable and recognized changes. The other faith-induced action that can produce a larger impact is the widespread usage of media to elicit a fundamental change in economic relations, systems and political structures.

Propaganda is a form of communication aimed towards influencing the attitude of a community towards some cause or position by presenting only one side of an argument. It is usually repeated and dispersed over a wide variety of media in order to create the chosen results in a target audience's attitudes. While many and various personalities would not prefer to reference religiously or spiritually based material as propaganda, to an extreme degree, it is. Whether it is the Adventism, Evangelicalism, Fundamentalism, Liberalism, Methodism or Pentecostalism movements, each message has a slight variation that flirts with not being completely, and holistically, Divinely Inspired. That is propaganda. These methods are used, and can be used in the place of aid and reformism to create a mass exodus from oppression to liberation through the business principle of supply and demand. "As the greater population of a community demands, the economic and political representatives are bound to supply, or risk becoming insignificant in their actions, existence and influence. It's not only the content of mass media that influences a culture or a religious tradition.

The form, or technology, may have an even greater impact. In a phrase coined and popularized by media guru Marshall McLuhan in the early 1960's, 'The medium is the message.' Each medium has its own language."[27] True liberation of an impoverished community arises from the deliverance of a factual Christian message of faith, and hope. It must be strong enough to encourage them in their present circumstance, and to inspire them to reach for greater results regardless of those same circumstances. Depending on an oppressed people stuck in a cycle of distrust, hurt and misinformation to initiate change within his or her own circumstances is almost inconceivable.

Additionally, the modern Christian church has abandoned them, or provided false promises of help and hope. Research has revealed that a staggering sixty-eight percent of the residents located in HRHA public housing complexes are illiterate. "While this project focuses on the integration of technology into ministry, it is important to understand that the basic principles of successful ministry are not dependent upon the latest and greatest digital tools, but that nothing spiritually significant will happen until the people who make up the family of God are *enabled* to think theologically about who they are, what they are called to do, and how each one of them is important to the task."[28] It is the position of this researcher that the message of hope transmitted via the media will enable the population to receive the factual message related to liberation and salvation.

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[27] Dan Andriacoo, *Screen Saved: Peril and Promise of Media in Ministry* (Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2000), 13.

[28] John P. Jewell, *Wired for Ministry: How the Internet, Visual Media, and Other New Technologies Can Serve Your Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2004), 46.

It is further this researcher's position that the application of media will aid in overcoming the blockade staged by illiteracy. The implemented media tools will set the scene for effective and transformative impacts of media ministry on low-income communities.

> The mass media is a reflection of the culture, but they also push it. The very critical thoughts that challenge an individual's morals and values are the same thoughts that are transmitted via the mass media, resulting in a changed society that borderlines redefining sincere morality. This happens because mass media eventually turn the marginal into the mainstream by persistently emphasizing the new, the unexpected and especially the shocking in their drive to build market shares. Religious beliefs and practices aren't isolated from the tug of the culture industries. After all, most folks spend a lot more time in front of the tube than they do in front of the alter—seven times as much if they go to church once every week and watch TV only an hour a day.[29]

Understanding and redirecting this reality creates the opportunity to positively aid, and transform the marginalized and oppressed into an empowered community with the Christian faith. The same economical and political structures that have created and nurtured their exploitation will have the opportunity to serve as their agent of liberation.

> The greatest biblical example of the liberative process is Exodus 3:7-12:
>
> Then the Lord said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt." But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" He said, "I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain."[30]

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[29] Andriacoo, 13.

[30] Exodus 3:7-12.

The ensuing correlative media ministry moments were not simply signs to intimidate Pharaoh, but were factual messages of God's Love for the children of Israel. They were employed to encourage Israel within their present circumstances, and to give them inspiration to reach for greater results in spite of those same circumstances.

This researcher contends that the ten plagues identified in Scripture were biblical media ministry programming segments utilized to inform the spiritually illiterate of the Egyptian low-income communities. This message of hope conveyed to the impoverished that in spite of their oppressive blockades that God was listening to their cries, and providing a way of escape. The plagues of the blood (Exodus 7:14-25); frogs (Exodus 7:25-8:11); gnats (Exodus 8:16-19); flies (Exodus 8:20-32); pestilence (Exodus 9:1-7); boils (Exodus 9:8-12); hail (Exodus 9:13-35); locusts (Exodus 10:1-20); darkness (Exodus 10:21-29); and death of the firstborn (Exodus 11:1-12:36) represented liberation messages of hope. The messages were transmitted via the medium of that time, word of mouth, and it broadcasted that The Lord was willing to inflict suffering upon every Egyptian due to the misuse, and continued prostitution of the enslaved and oppressed community of the Israelites.

While these messages of hope were natural and/or physical manifestations seen and acknowledged by all Egyptians, they traveled outside of the immediate area of the liberator, Moses, and into the residents of the intended audiences. This message of liberation encouraged and inspired the oppressed, but it also alerted the oppressor to change position and posture as it related to the marginalized. The media focus of this project bears similar intent, and should yield similar results. The natural manifestations will be the effectiveness of this project leading the poor, and unbelieving members of this

community from a place of complacent or displaced faith to a place of active and aggressive faith. The physical manifestations will be the transformative effects of this project piloting the downtrodden from a place of despondent isolation to improved advancements and qualities of life. "One of the major insights of postmodern thought in its various forms is that the modern self's sense of identity is an illusion. We are not who we think we are. Postmodern thinkers destroy precisely this illusion when they remind us that our identity is never self-made. Who we are is always a product of various other factors. Poststructuralism, for instance, one of the most well-known forms of postmodern thought, emphasizes language: our language is never self-made; rather, it is inherited from others."[31] It is the position of this researcher that those living in low-income communities are victims of this postmodern school of thought. Many live within the realities of an illusion. They believe that their current predicaments are permanent without the understanding that they are truly the products of the interpretations of others birthed into identical circumstances. The media ministry employed in this project sought to deliver enlightenment to those misconceptions and distorted perceptions of the modern self by consistently educating, and energizing the people with the factual, spiritual truth of liberation.

Even though the basic purpose of the media is profit making, they try to define and re-define the human. "Media is not entertainment only, but it is also loaded with messages that confronts, convicts and corrects the people through these messages."[32]

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[31] Joerg Rieger, *Opting for the Margins: Postmodernity and Liberation in Christian Theology* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003), 181.

[32] Thomas Matthew, *The Need for and Relevance of Media Education in Pastoral Ministry* (Delhi, India: Academy Press, 2006), 20.

It is with this knowledge and understanding that people are easily motivated and inspired to help others out of compassion, and love for real-life community situations. Interacting with the community directly and personally instead of programmatically will permit the establishment and development of necessary relationships, and the acceptance of the Christian message of hope. In juxtapose to this is the over exposure to the calamities and sufferings of the movies through media that can make the viewer, the listener or the reader feel not as a member of that suffering community, but rather as a privileged member protected from it.[33] Hence, the oppressed become the oppressors while remaining oppressed.

> In the highly individualistic culture in which Americans live, personhood should not be reduced to individualism and autonomy. A person, while distinguishable from others, is also inseparably connected to others and interdependent. Our personhood comes into being in interaction with other persons and with history, our surrounding culture, and our circumstances. Our personhood is also formed by how we understand ourselves in relation to these factors, how we see our past, present, and the future we hope for, and our awareness of ourselves as both distinct and connected. We become persons in relation to other persons, and other persons become persons in relation to us.[34]

The Old Testament recordings in Isaiah 60:1-3 reestablishes covenant between God, and Israel by declaring HIS Spirit and Word to remain with them permanently. The "Arise, shine;" command by God is the instructional prompting of God to His People to reposition themselves for advancement, and share this advancement through evangelism to others. This matures into the message of faith for the non-believers. It encourages them to trust in the God of Israel, and that God would do great works even while chaos is happening around them. This is another expression of liberation theology through the

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[33] Matthew, 21-22.

[34] Owen C. Thomas and Ellen K. Wondra, *Introduction to Theology, 3rd Edition* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2002), 23.

biblical transcripts of media. It is through this effective and transformative effort that The Lord did not solicit individuals to assemble in the synagogue or temple. However, He told them to pass on the message of faith to other individuals immediately after they had repositioned themselves.

The intent of the Christian message of faith and hope is to convey to all people that God loves them enough to meet them wherever they may be. His desire is to restore, or deliver them from oppression. It is the power of an All-Mighty God that is capable of ignoring the circumstances of bondage, oppression and sin to reclaim those who have been overtaken by the determinants of the worldly systems.

> God has given the gift of forgiveness. God has refused to render to humanity what is due sin, but instead graciously endures humanity's rejection and extends redemption and reconciliation in Christ. Justice in the classic sense of *suum cuique* or "to each what he deserves," would refuse to have suffered the injustice of sin and the cross; instead, God in Christ shouldered the cross and refused to cease suffering, defeating sin and injustice by forgiving it, by bearing it in order to bear it away. Accordingly, the atoning grace of God in Christ displaces such justice as the modality of God's overcoming of sin and sets in its place forgiveness. God confronts sin, injustice, capitalism, not with justice conceived in the liberationists' terms, but with the gift of forgiveness.[35]

This project will produce verifiable evidence that supports utilizing media ministry components and tools to insert the message of Christ, and Christianity into the seldom-visited areas of poverty. It will prove effective in restoring hope/optimism to low-income communities signifying attitude changes, and transformative by producing measurable, positive behavioral changes. These changes will result in the oppressed assuming more active and proactive measures of deliverance from their own menial postures.

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[35] Daniel M. Bell, Jr., *Liberation Theology After The End of History: The Refusal to Cease Suffering* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2001), 146.

The results of this reestablished covenant with God, referenced earlier, would be deliverance, growth and prosperity. It will reattach the impoverished community to greater segments of the city and metropolitan area similar to the unifying of Israel as referenced in Isaiah 60:3. It will cause other nations and kings to come to the Lord as a result of the Lord's presence upon His People. Interpretively, everyone desires to advance and prosper. Daily people awake and rise from their personal spaces, and venture outside of their comfort zones in order to come into contact with greater opportunities that will enhance, or improve their quality of life. This is not an isolated mentality in a post-modernism society, but this was the stance in biblical Israel as well.

> Liberation theology dramatizes the link between the origins of Christianity and the recent shift of its center of gravity from the West to the global South, which has generated a significant change in what it means to be a "Christian." Many more destitute and formerly excluded people are now full-scale participants in the worldwide Christian community. The result of this upheaval is that the Christianity of the twenty-first-century has begun to look more like that of the first two centuries, when streams of women, slaves, and impoverished city dwellers joined the new congregations. The original idea of Christianity as a faithful way of life has begun to displace the enforced system of creeds that defined it during much of the intervening time.[36]

It is the responsibility of the leaders within the Body of Christ to utilize the influence of their positions to reach out to those who have lost all hope and confidence in faith, and spawn a spiritual reformation. Media resources will clearly and informatively communicate that the disenfranchised, hopeless people of the low-income echelon can experience life-altering opportunities with the establishment, or reestablishment of a relationship with God. Evangelistic media strategy employs the efforts of sending the Word of God into the businesses, homes, market places and social gathering places with

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[36] Harvey Cox, *The Future of Faith* (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2009), 195.

the intent of making an impact so great that a spiritual transformation would take place leading to a mental and physical transformation.

"Spiritual life on the human level involves growth and fundamental change, but this aspect of life cannot be applied to God as living. God does not change in the sense of becoming something different; God is eternally the same. But, God's relation to the creation and especially to humanity changes. The theological issue is that the Bible testifies to a God whose attitude of love toward humanity is unchanging, but who is affected by human responses to the divine action. These elements of changelessness and change are often presented in analogy to the love of a parent for a child."[37] The primary focus of a liberation approach to this project is not to over-emphasize the inadequacies of the low-income, nor to minimize the suffering caused by the oppressive theories created within their lives. This project will identify those respective areas, acknowledge them for what they are, and address how those areas can be defeated through the empowerment of God's Knowledge and Word. Electronic media, pre-recorded media, print media, radio media, televised media and Internet accessible media will combine and converge together to disburse the flood of liberating practices. This media will be distributed to as many low-income communities as possible in an effort to awaken the giants of hope and strength via awareness. This project's hypothesis remains that low-income, disenfranchised and marginalized individuals are more receptive to the Word of God given to them within their private context, and affords the opportunities to receive it, digest it, comprehend it and apply it on their own terms. It is from this point that relationship can be established with the Word that is presented; the God of the Word that

[37] Thomas and Wondra, 93.

is presented; and the messenger of the God of the Word that is presented. It is by these steps that individuals can enhance the transformative process by leaving their private worship areas, and entering into corporate worship areas resulting in church growth due to evangelism through media.

"For most preachers, talking is easy. What is difficult is the conveyance of meaning, or communicating with the right combination of syntax and style to make a message heard. Even with the supposedly captive audience of a congregation the challenge remains, as the expectation for communication has risen along with our digital media options."[38] Being an effective, impactful and transformative presence requires that every aspect of the Christian message is assessed, evaluated and supplemented to ensure that it is conveyed, received and understood, as God would have it. It is within this acknowledgement that a detailed look at the information that will be transcribed into the various media forms will be assessed. "Worshippers are sophisticated media consumers, and the expectation of quality is high. To be better preachers, we must learn to believe in the power of the visual to proclaim Christ. We must move beyond just text and learn to think also in image, discovering the power of mixing visual media into our preaching."[39] The stagnation of liberation for many of the low-income and impoverished is the lack of a complete, and total understanding of the information being presented. It was mentioned earlier that a staggering sixty-eight percent of the residents in public housing are illiterate, meaning that words on a page, in a book, on a flyer or magazine frustrate, intimidate or destroy the residents. However, viewing a podcast, listening to a CD, streaming a video or watching the television is less challenging. They provide a key medium to reach

[38] Len Wilson, *The Wired Church 2.0* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2008), 45.

[39] Ibid., 46.

beyond their incarcerated mental walls and unlock the doors to insight, and options. Liberation theology does not complain of the difficulties of the fight, it simply finds another way to set the captives free.

Liberation is not an option that one is able to ascertain alone. It requires someone with the courage and tenacity to stand strong against the cultural norms for the purpose of giving someone else the opportunity of freedom. Leadership in liberation theology is uncommon due to the hardships, and stressors related to trying to accomplish a sincere deed for another. The seventeenth chapter of John focuses on Jesus' conversation with God as a testimony to His faithfulness and obedience, but more importantly, His pursuit of the freedom for others. It records:

> Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth. "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me."[40]

The Christian church is looked to, and mandated to be the leading agent of change and guide to freedom. It is expected to endure the hardships and stressors of the world without failure, or fatigue in efforts to be effective and transformative in the lives of those absent of hope. In other words the Church is expected to advocate for justice. The medieval Christian understanding of justice finds its most definitive articulation in the work of St. Thomas Aquinas.

[40] St. John 17:17-21.

In accord with the tradition of the Church, which has appropriated the classic notion of justice as *suum cuique,* Aquinas defines justice as "the perpetual and constant will to render to each one his right."[41]

There is a solemn duty for each leader within each Church to direct all of their attention and efforts towards spiritual growth, and development. They are to assist in the facilitation of the Church being that agent of change and guidance. The individuals standing in the greatest need of change and guidance are those who have been denied the opportunities for both. Denial, obstruction and restriction are commonalties used to keep the oppressed subdued in the low-income echelon of society. They speak without a voice, live without a life, and endure with no hope of a better tomorrow. The Christian church is the centurion created to embrace the tools of media ministry, employ them to reach, not rape, the less fortunate members of the global society, and lift them out of destitution and despair into the true righteousness of God.

As the world continues to evolve so does the concerns, issues and problems of its' residents. The Christian church must also evolve equally or ahead of the world in order to remain effective, impactful and transformative. Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights are not as effective as they were fifty years ago; just as preaching a gospel of exclusivity opposed to inclusivity is also becoming ineffective.

[41] Bell, 102.

> Media ministry is not and should not be used to communicate to the world that the Church is acquiescing to its' culture rather than communicate to the world that the Church is fighting for the eternal souls of humanity by giving competition for humanity's attention and commitment. The Church's engagement or disengagement with the mass-mediated culture has to be faithful to God's truth in all its forms. This includes being faithful to: the Word of God (in Scripture, Tradition and the living Christ); the church (the community, the Body of Christ); the uniqueness of the human person (made in the image and likeness of God); and the text (message) and the context (circumstances or location).[42]

In order to be faithful the Christian church must not only conform to the methods of communicating the Gospel of Christ, but it must also challenge the generations to actively engage in the work of Christ as Jesus did with the young rich man in Matthew 19:21, instructing the young man to sell everything. The other aspect of faithfulness that must be displayed is a conscious denial of the Christian church's preferred, acceptable needs, and embracing the actual needs of the community. Similar to that of the Samaritan woman in John 4:7-14, who sought well water from Jesus, and He, instead, gave her living water that she was really in need of. The liberal approach, to empowering people within the community to expect a better and greater outcome for their life, is proven to be needed based on the high levels of crime, the increase in high school dropout rates, and the high teen pregnancy rates. These are all mitigating circumstances that are missing one valuable element…hope. It is through the media ministry of this project that hope and other options for advancement will be presented, and proven effective and transformative for low-income communities.

It is the position of this researcher that the root cause of the poor being robbed of its' hope, and remaining in financial despair is the absence of the local Christian church. The Church unconsciously serves as one of the community's oppressors, and must

[42] Andriacco, 38.

undertake a spiritual renewal. Renewal in the church is not a matter of discovering the right program, but of engaging in a right process. The real need of congregations is for a renewing process rather than a canned renewal program. "The *renewing process* is engaged when pastoral leadership and a community of Christian persons join together to engage the ministry principles of particularity, intentionality, and mutuality. From the printing press to television, every advance in technology that brings new possibilities for the church demonstrates the need for ordering principles."[43] Many of the individuals who are classified as being a part of a low-income community, family or household are also individuals that do not possess a positive image of the Christian church. The Christian church is viewed as the church of old, one that is out of touch with the realities and truths of our present society. The refusal to evolve as the rest of the world evolves has not only left the Christian church living in a nostalgic state, but it has also rendered the Christian church virtually ineffective and obsolete. The constant changes in communicative methods and tools are requiring that the Body of Christ ramp up its' delivery techniques for evangelism, pastoral care and discipleship.

The proper usage of media within the Christian church, as a conduit for sharing the message of hope and as an extension of the Church's identity, will prove effective and transformative in liberating those bound by financial inadequacies. This tool can serve as a reconnecting entity to begin funneling attention and nutriment to those neglected.

[43] Jewell, 47-48.

"The essence of nurture is to unleash, to feed, and to prune fully organic life, according to a fixed protocol chosen purposefully, according to an unswerving principle that governs the entire context. So there is no nurture where there is no regularity, no nursery where there is no order."[44] The Christian church must be consistent in providing the message of hope to the poor, and with a structured program to lift them out of despair. Sporadic contact with the marginalized, and the absence of a defined agenda for progress will result in the Church's continued ineffectiveness. "The Christian church's engagement or disengagement with the mass-mediated culture has to be faithful to God's truth in all its forms. This includes being faithful to: the Word of God (in Scripture, Tradition and the living Christ); the church (the community, the Body of Christ); the uniqueness of the human person (made in the image and likeness of God); and the text (message) and the context (circumstances or location)."[45] It is through this faithfulness that the impoverished communities of the world are connected to *The* God that appears unreachable and untouchable due to the absence of the Christian church; direct representatives of God.

[44] Abraham Kuyper, *Rooted & Grounded: The Church as Organism and Institution* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian's Library Press, 2013), 16.

[45] Andriacco, 38.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

Hypothesis

It is the position of this researcher that the governmental, and social systems in place are not aiding in the full liberation of the economically destitute or poor. While many initiatives and programs have been created, and are available to urban residents, the absence of the Christian church's visibility within these contexts has rendered defeat, and a loss of hope to the marginalized. This project evolved in importance and relevance due to the decreased visibility of the Christian church's activeness within this project's context. It is the position of this researcher that the Church's absence has become prevalent, in part, due to the lack of adequate community engagement and understanding within these churches. Across time the church has struggled with this matter. There have been seasons and situations when the church has been able to integrate these responsibilities, and this identity into its understanding and practice. However, to this avail it is believed that the residents of HRHA, generally speaking, have lost hope. This is a direct result of the message of hope being absent in practice and theory.

> Participation in a culture means that one is involved in a particular social matrix, a particular value system. The value systems, in turn, vary according to differing influences that called them into existence and established the culture. While the joys and pains of the human heart may remain the same, the living conditions that impact human beings and define different social contexts evoke different human responses. The differing responses have established separate identities. Because cultures do vary and present a variety of influences that shape perspectives and development, it is critical to recognize that psychological theories are contextual and not universal. Due to the fact that the essence of humanity is the same the world over, it is possible to modify theories to appropriately consider different cultures. Differing cultural identities, however, means no one theory fits all.[1]

The hypothesis of this project is that low-income, disenfranchised and marginalized individuals are more receptive to the Word of God within their private context, affording the opportunities for digestion, comprehension and application. Relationships with the message of hope, the messenger of hope and with God will be established or re-established as a direct result. This will prove that the message of hope is effective [verifiable change in attitude], and transformative [verifiable change in behavior] when provided via media ministry.

The Problem Statement

This research project is birthed from the decreased visibility of local Christian churches being active, evangelistically or missionally, in the low-income or urban community that is this project's context. It is the position of this researcher that this has become prevalent due to the lack of adequate pastoral supervision within these churches.

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[1] Lee H. Butler, Jr. *Liberating Our Dignity, Saving Our Souls* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2006), 81.

"Across time the church has struggled with this matter. There have been seasons and situations when the church has been able to integrate these responsibilities and this identity into its understanding and practice. More often than not, however, it has pursued its supervisory task within a hierarchical arrangement that at least hinders, if not denies, the mutual accountability and caring responsibilities of the whole body of believers."[2] To this avail it is believed that the residents have lost hope of defeating their current circumstances due to the message of hope being absent in practice and theory.

The Solution Statement

This project will employ simple evangelistic and missional tactics to reinforce, or provide hope to those living in low-income housing complexes through the usage of media ministry tools. The proposed solution [treatment hypothesis] will include creating Digital Video Discs (DVDs) of inspirational Christian messages presented by the researcher for each household identified on the designated HRHA properties. It is the proven assumption of this researcher that, even though these are residents of low-income, public or urban housing, each household possesses access to a DVD playing device and/or television. This will enable them to play and watch the pre-recorded information distributed. It is the intent of this project to urge each participating household to watch the free, weekly DVDs for the purpose of being encouraged with the Christian message of hope. It is the position of this researcher that these messages of hope will prove effective and transformative for the target population.

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[2] Pohly, 14.

Research Design

The Approach

It is the intent of this project to validate the assumption that the residents of HRHA have lost hope through the implementation of a Transformative Mixed Methods Approach of quantitative and qualitative testing. Considering the target population's believed apprehension towards those who represent the Christian church, the mixed methods approach was the more logical and viable. "The Transformative mixed methods is a design that uses a theoretical lens drawn from social justice or power as an overarching perspective within a design that contact both quantitative and qualitative data. The data in this form of study could be converged or it could be ordered sequentially with one building on the other."[3] These analytical steps produce data that was analyzed to determine whether or not the decreased visibility of the Christian church truly contributes to the continued bondage, and poverty of those residing in low-income communities.

The pretest of the mixed method approach consisted of a quantitative questionnaire or survey of approximately ten to fifteen simple questions. The responses required either a "Yes" or "No" answer. A single-stage, random sampling was utilized during this process.

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[3] John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 4th edition (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2014), 16.

> With randomization, a representative sample from a population provides the ability to generalize to a population. The researcher chooses a random start on a list and selects every *X* number people on the list. The *X* number is based on a fraction determined by the number of people on a list and the number that are to be selected on the list. Less desirable is a nonprobability sample (or *convenience sample*), in which respondents are chosen based on their convenience and availability.[4]

This questionnaire or survey was distributed to each occupied unit on two properties of HRHA, and requested to be completed by the head of the household. Based upon the number of responders to the quantitative questionnaire or survey, the qualitative interview(s) were scheduled. The qualitative interview was comprised of approximately ten to fifteen detailed questions for validating the data collected in the quantitative survey. This also lent to the triangulation process by adding additional data to further analyze, and compare. In the event that the response was less than ten percent of the residents per property, then the quantitative questionnaire or survey was planned to be administered during one of the mandatory community meetings that each resident is required to attend as a condition of occupancy. Once both the quantitative and qualitative pretests were completed then the treatment hypothesis was administered.

Pre-recorded Christian messages of hope were organized to be conversational and interactive in nature. It was the intent that the researcher would encourage and invite the viewer to enter into a dialogue surrounding real-life challenges, hardships and struggles; and, engage in relevant discussions that yield practical solutions. The objective was for the viewer to feel as if they are sitting with the researcher, and having a personal and private talk. “We live in an era of great diversity of thought in culture and significant doctrinal diversity within the church.

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[4] Creswell, *Research Design*, 158.

A doctrinally dominated approach to community formation threatens to accentuate dishonesty within our communities and division among Christians. At a time when division among Christ-followers is a great barrier to the gracious redemption Jesus offers to the world, authenticity in dialogue is an essential rule of ministry."[5]

While worship services from the Abundant Life Christian Center International, which is the researcher's ministry context, would be the simplest production effort the local Christian church is the source of severe hurt and offense. Utilizing liberation theology contextualization, the absence of the Christian church active in the community is the identified sin. This violation reckons the Christian church as a perpetrator of the crime of malpractice. It misrepresents the Christian messages of hope and salvation, and the true personifications of God and Jesus Christ. So, introducing or reintroducing the victims [low-income residents] to their assailants [a local Christian church] for help or hope is illogical and impractical. The key for success was to gain personal relationship as an individual, before it is attempted corporately. There is a requirement for salvation to be presented in order for redemption to be possible. The researcher's approach to presenting the Christian message of hope through a pre-recorded, personal interaction yielded a greater opportunity to reconnect the disenfranchised back to the community of faith for actualized liberation. Our goal is not to be a postmodern church or to affirm postmodernism any more than our goal is to reject any and all things associated with this worldview. Our goal is to embody the gospel of Jesus Christ authentically as a community in an ever-changing culture.

[5] Conder, 150.

"For the church to be effective and authentic in this day, we must better understand postmodernity, become conversant with postmodern people, and be able to function in the midst of many postmodern assumptions."[6]

"Postmodernism is considered to be a philosophy that concludes that absolute truth does not exist. It wrestles against traditional belief systems with the intent of ensuring that all vantage points are heard and given equal weight. This school of thought has led to the concept that all truth is relative, or relativism; meaning that what is right for one person is not necessarily the same for another. An example of this is sexual morality by which Christianity advocates that sexual intercourse outside of marriage is wrong. However, postmodernism teaches that it only applies to those who follow Jesus Christ."[7] Postmodernism reduces all religions to the realm of simple opinions and preferences, yet it is with this understanding that the researcher approached engagement with a disinterested community, and presented the Christian message of hope and steps towards a better life holistically.

To a certain degree the researcher's approach appeared to be aimed at being a treatment rooted in psychology instead of theology. This was due to a lack of an understanding of the intertwining relationship between the two. It was a partnership of balance.

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[6] Conder, 43.

[7] Ibid., 84.

> Misconceptions abound on the relationship between psychology and religion. Psychology and religion are interlocking systems of human nature. Psychology has to do with psyche/soul functions, and religion has to do with psyche/soul expressions for communal survival. A few common myths seek to explain psychology's distance from religion. The myths I am presented with most often are: Psychology is anti-Christian, and all psychologists are atheists. Both myths, of course, are false. Psychology is not a belief system for which humanity is the divine; therefore psychology is neither necessarily for nor against Christianity. Furthermore, all psychologists do not believe theism to be a crutch developed by the psyche as a defense against realization of mortality.[8]

While all broadcasts, homilies and sermons were laced with interpretation and opinion, the focus of this treatment hypothesis was to identify and assist the root cause of unchanged poverty; the core self-image and community interpretation. Employing liberation theology with postmodernism enlightenment minimized the sense of urgency by the researcher, and reduced the sense of pressure by the target population. It created a mutually beneficial relationship, and established the stage for a progressive relationship to be formed. "A basic human relational defense is self-preservation. As much as we want to be open in our intimate relationships, we have a built-in defensiveness that inhabits our desires to be known. Although we recognize that closeness and growth comes through our personal presentation of absolute vulnerability, our fear of being hurt activates our self-preserving defense mechanisms."[9] The Christian message of hope penetrated the absolute vulnerability of the target population because it was presented within the security of their private residency, by an unfamiliar source [not the Christian Church] proclaiming a familiar message.

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[8] Butler, 82.

[9] Ibid., 121.

The Christian message of hope is a message that encourages an individual towards optimism and strength. The messages were not centered on New Testament teachings only, but they were generated from inspiring passages of scripture from both, the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. The pre-recorded Christian messages of hope focused on learning or reflecting upon the Promises of God to humanity, and determining how to access and activate these promises within everyday life. The precepts of courage, determination, faith, grace, hope, joy, love, peace, prayer, redemption, salvation, strength and victorious living were interwoven and shared as parts of the Christian message of hope. The appearance may be evangelistic, but the intent was mission driven.

The types of expected outcomes were:

- Participants would join a Christian Church;
- Participants would rejoin a Christian Church;
- Participants would start or increase dedicated prayer time;
- Participants would start or increase dedicated personal, Biblical study time;
- Participants would display optimism within their personal circumstances.

It was this project's proposed, hypothetical conclusion that having the Christian church visible in low-income communities through media ministry with the Christian message of hope would produce an effective and transformative impact that would improve the individuals, and the community as a whole.

At the conclusion of the term of six to twelve weeks this researcher administered a post-test consisting of the same pretest format with slightly modified questions. This reflected the solicitation of data for comparative analysis and triangulation. It was this project's intent to clearly conclude that the Christian message of hope shared via media

ministry is effective [verifiable attitude change]. It is the position of this researcher that a percentage of the project participants would be encouraged and optimistic for an improved life without noticeable changes in their circumstances. While their environmental conditions may not change, the participants will have a more positive outlook on their lives. Additionally, it was this project's intent to clearly conclude that the Christian message of hope shared via media ministry is transformative [verifiable behavior change]. It is the position of this researcher that a percentage of the project participants would commit or re-commit their lives to Christ, and display a recognizable behavior change.

The Data Collection

The role of the researcher in the data collection process was as an administrator and facilitator during the pretest and posttest. Once the two HRHA properties were identified for sampling the researcher assembled the prescreened volunteers, also known as the Administrative Support Team, and provided instructions as to the Rules of Engagement. The Rules of Engagement are simple, strategies that were put in place to ensure that all encounters were managed with courtesy, and professionalism. Each Administrative Support Team member was trained in basic communication, public interaction techniques, conflict resolution and academic research protocol.

Next, a small group from the support team, led by the researcher, addressed one HRHA property at a time to administer the quantitative survey. The researcher served as the primary facilitator to address any challenges that the volunteer(s) could not address. It was the intent of this researcher to minimize the interaction with the residents of the

properties in order to clearly depict during the posttest analysis whether, or not, the Gospel message of hope was the catalyst, as opposed to the interaction with the researcher. The quantitative surveys and the qualitative interviews were conducted by the support team operating under the supervision of the researcher, and in accordance with the Rules of Engagement. The agenda was to interact with the heads of household for each unit on the designated properties in pursuit of a target metric of at least ten percent of the adult occupants living in low-income housing. The survey was administered door-to-door in order to assist any resident with reading and interpreting the wording if needed. As noted previously, there is an exceptionally high level of illiteracy within the context. Additionally, it gave the administrator the opportunity to schedule the qualitative interview, or conduct it on the spot. "In the convergent parallel mixed methods design the investigator typically collects both forms of data at roughly the same time and then integrates the information in the interpretation of the overall results."[10]

Quantitatively, the goal of the researcher was to determine the relationship between the accessibility to the Christian message of hope and the target population's decisions to remain in low-income housing accommodations. The experimental design was executed instead of the descriptive design because the researcher implemented a pretest, the treatment hypothesis and then a posttest. The logic for this design selection was that the researcher aimed to establish causality as opposed to variable association. This portion of the research focused on the convergent reasons rather than the divergent reasons.

[10] Creswell, 15.

For the purpose of clarity the convergent parallel mixed methods is a form of mixed methods design in which the researcher converges or merges quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem.[11] Qualitative approaches to research include ethnography, field research, ground theory and phenomenological. Phenomenology emphasizes a focus on people's subjective experiences and interpretations. It is used to understand and convey how the world appears to the participants. Hence, this was the avenue used in this research. The phenomenological study assisted the researcher in describing the meaning of the experiences and interpretations for several individuals based on their [the participants] lived experiences in poverty. This helped to focus on what the target population had in common with one another, while navigating through the impoverished challenges that affected their existence.

At the conclusion of the term of six to twelve weeks this researcher administered a posttest consisting of the same pretest format with slightly modified questions. It reflected the solicitation of data for comparative analysis, and to verify triangulation. It was this project's intent to clearly conclude that the Christian message of hope shared via media ministry is effective [verifiable attitude change]. It is the position of this researcher that a percentage of the project participants would be encouraged and optimistic for an improved life without noticeable changes in their circumstances. Additionally, it was this project's intent to clearly conclude that the Christian message of hope shared via media ministry is transformative [verifiable behavior change]. It is the position of this research that a percentage of the project participants would commit or re-commit their lives to Christ, and display a recognizable behavior change.

[11] Creswell, 15.

The Triangulation

"The effectiveness of triangulation rest on the premise that the weaknesses in each single method will be compensated by the counter-balancing strengths of another method. Although it has always been observed that each method has assets and liabilities, triangulation purports to exploit the assets and neutralize, rather than compound, the liabilities."[12] Triangulation is employed to strengthen the validity of the outcomes. Data that is collected, and studied from at least three different sources will help clarify the research results. "*Triangulate* different data sources of information by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification for themes. If themes are established based on converging several sources of data or perspectives from participants, then this process can be claimed as adding to the validity of the study."[13] It is through triangulation that the credibility of the research increased by combining quantitative and qualitative methods together. "Triangulation is the combination of two or more methodological approaches, theoretical perspectives, data sources, investigators and analysis methods to study the same phenomenon. These lead to five types of triangulation; which are methodological triangulation, investigator triangulation, theoretical triangulation, analysis triangulation and data triangulation."[14]

This research employed data and methodological triangulation in its' approach. Data triangulation utilized time, space and persons involved in order to substantiate

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[12] Todd D. Jick, *The Mixed Methods Reader: Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods, Triangulation in Action,* ed. Vicki L. Plano Clark and John W. Creswell (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2008), 110.

[13] Creswell, 201.

[14] Ashatu Hussein, "The use of Triangulation in Social Science Research: Can qualitative and quantitative methods be combined?," *Journal of Comparative Social Work* 2009/1 (April 2009): 3.

validation. This project invoked the pretest and posttest on the same day of the week, and during the same time of day. It was administered in the same location and manner, and with the same personnel. Methodological triangulation was also engaged for both validation and completeness purposes. "Methodological triangulation is defined as the use of more than two methods in studying the same phenomenon under investigation."[15] The multiple methods used included: literature reviews, qualitative context interviews, quantitative in-person surveys, field notes, observations and context associate feedback. The researcher used the between-method of methodological triangulation. "The 'between-method triangulation' or across-method triangulation involves combining and utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methods in studying a single phenomenon. The between-method triangulation has been used for the aim of achieving convergent validity and testing the degree of external validity."[16] The outcomes of the methods, whether differing or agreeing, determined the validity. If they are agreed, then its' validity is stronger than if they differ. "Denzin reminds us that using a combination of triangulation methods allows the research to achieve the best of each method, while overcoming the deficiencies of each."[17] By implementing these methods and tools the results were strengthen, and added to the validity of this project's results.

[15] Hussein, 4.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Norman K. Denzin, *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods* (New Brunswick, NJ: Adeline Transaction, 2009).

Measurement

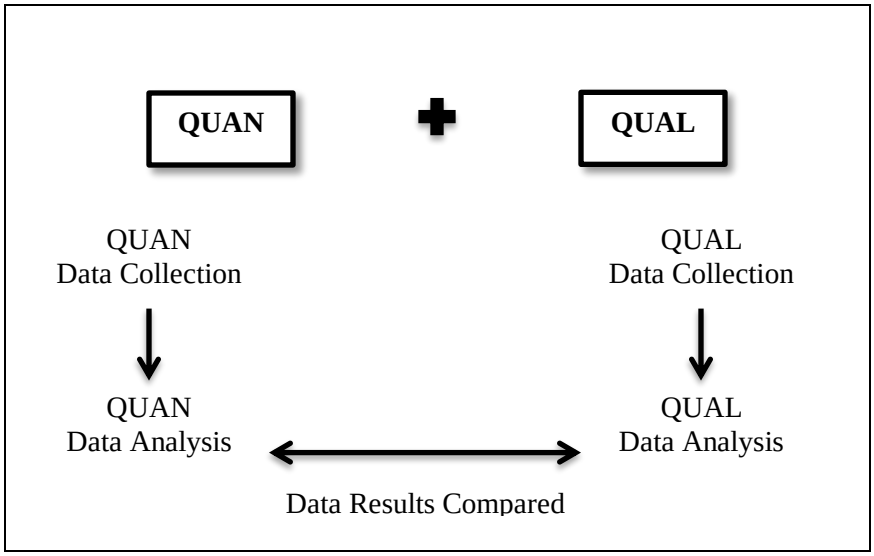
This project employed the Concurrent Transformative Design for measurement. It is characterized by the concurrent collection of quantitative and qualitative data where the priority of the data is given equally (See Figure 4). The stage for integration of the data was during the analysis phase.

> This perspective can be based on ideologies such as critical theory, advocacy, participatory research, and a conceptual or theoretical framework. It is the driving force behind all methodological choices such as defining the problem; identifying the design and data sources; and analyzing, interpreting, and reporting results throughout the research process. It may involve a triangulation of both quantitative and qualitative data to best converge information. The two types of data are collected at the same time during one data collection phase and may have equal or unequal priority.[18]

The concurrent transformative design measurement approach is known for taking on the form of either the concurrent triangulation or concurrent nested design. This project assumed the concurrent triangulation design features.

[18] John W. Creswell, Vicki L. Plano Clark, Michelle L. Gutmann and William E. Hanson, *The Mixed Methods Reader: Advanced Mixed Methods Research Design* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication, Inc., 2008), 185.

The following figure depicts its' organization:



Concurrent Triangulation Design[19]
Figure 4.

As a result of the concurrent transformative design taking on the features of the concurrent triangulation design it shared in its' specific strengths and weaknesses. The strengths of this design were: its' familiarity with many researchers, shorter data collection time and offset weaknesses inherent to one design by using both designs. The weaknesses of this design were: it required expertise and effort in studying the phenomenon while using two different methods, and it was difficult to compare two types of data while resolving discrepancies that arose. This research approached the project from the critical theory aspect of researching. "Critical theory is a theory determined critical to the extent that it seeks human emancipation to liberate human being from circumstances that enslave them.

[19] Creswell, *The Mixed Methods Reader*, 181.

Such theories aim to explain and transform *all* the circumstances that enslave human beings."[20] This theoretical approach to developing the research questions afforded measurable and quantifiable components that adequately validated this study. The quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously, then analyzed and compared. The questions of both methods were designed with the intent of determining the attitudinal, emotional and spiritual disposition of the participants from the critical theory perspective. The quantitative method intended to produce general responses, and the qualitative method more detailed responses. This is explained in more detail in the next section, *Instrumentation*, and examples of the questionnaires and surveys are in the Appendices.

Instrumentation

There are numerous procedures of collecting data: field notes or journals, interviews, observations, and questionnaires or surveys. Quantitative designs use closed-ended questionnaires in order to gather, analyze and interpret the data. Qualitative methods use interviews, notes from diaries or journals, observations and open-ended questionnaires to obtain, analyze and interpret the data. On the other hand, mixed method approaches generally use closed-ended questionnaires [numerical data], interviews and observations [text data] to collect information.

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[20] James Bohman, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2013 Edition), s.v. "Critical Theory," ed. Edward N. Zalta, (accessed October 11, 2014) http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2013/entries/critical-theory/.

For triangulation purposes of the data, the researchers can obtain information through different procedures to heighten the dependability, trustworthiness and their interpretation. The main instruments used in this mixed method research consisted of closed-ended and open-ended questionnaires or surveys, in-person interviews and context observations. These different ways of gathering information supplemented each other, and boosted the validity and dependability of the data. The quantitative data was obtained through closed-ended questionnaires or surveys, and the qualitative data through open-ended questionnaires that were used during the in-person interviews and observations. The items on both questionnaires were developed based on the research objectives and research questions.

The quantitative and qualitative surveys, pretest and posttest formats, each contained specific instructions and disclosure statements located at the top of the page (See "Life Focus Survey" and/or "Life Focus Interview Questionnaire" in Appendices). The participants were instructed, "Please circle the best answer. Your participation in this assessment is *strictly* voluntary. The information collected during this interview will be used for academic research only, and your name, address and contact numbers will remain confidential." Additionally, each participants' name, gender, apartment unit number, contact number, HRHA complex of residence and the date of survey completion was also collected via the bottom of each survey. The support team members were trained and instructed to observe the non-verbal actions of the participants, and note agitations, discomforts, and hesitancies as well as cooperativism, excitement, and contentment. Field notes were made in the margins and back pages of the questionnaires, and on additional note pages that were provided.

The final element of the instrumentation was the researcher's observation of each participant reaction to direct interaction with the researcher post implementation. The details of this finding are explained in Chapter Six.

CHAPTER FIVE

FIELD EXPERIENCE

The Collection of Data

The Preparation

The researcher solicited volunteers from his ministry context, ALCCI, to commit to academic research support for a period of twelve to twenty weeks. The designated time would be used as: administrative support, community contact support, production support and training support. Administrative support maintained the project's timeline and any adjustments related to it; accounted for volunteer personnel's attendance and participation; and, ensured all consent forms, field notes, questionnaires and surveys were properly completed, organized and filed. Community support interacted with the residents of the project's context; delivered the ministry media and replaced defective media when needed; administered the pretest and posttest; and, compiled field notes through interviews, questionnaires and observations. Production support developed the true ministry media for distribution; filmed, edited and duplicated the actual ministry material; labeled and packaged individual DVDs; and, maintained the projected implementation timeline. Training support managed all training for this project.

Administrative Support

The administrative support team served as an extremely vital component to this project. Their focused responsibility was to maintain all documentation related to the lifeline of this project. The team was comprised of two individuals [Mrs. J.S. and Mrs. J.C.] whose backgrounds were in administrative services and office management. They aided in the development of an achievable timeline for adequate preparation and training of the volunteers, implementation of the treatment hypothesis, review of the complete implementation process and compilation of all data. The original start date of this project was scheduled for May 7, 2014 with a projected completion date of August 13, 2014. These dates included the quantitative and qualitative pretest being implemented on the start date between the hours of 4:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. This day of the week and time were selected because it was the traditional day that most people attended mid-week bible study, or worship service at local churches. Additionally, the specific time of the day was selected for the intent of engaging the employed residents of the low-income housing complex as they returned home. It was the intent of this support team, in its' planning considerations, to not inconvenience the potential participants, and to minimize that likelihood as much as possible. The aforementioned time was the only time schedule for the implementation of the pretest, and collection of pre-treatment data.

The administrative support team created and ensured utilization of sign-in rosters for all volunteers that assisted with any segment of this project. The first step was the general solicitation of individuals interested in volunteer support that were willing to commit to the proposed term advertised.

The administrative support team compiled all of the names, email addresses and phone numbers for record, and categorized the information based on age. This coding process proved effective in creating generational teams of mentorship, and in building cohesiveness throughout the full support team. Next, the administrative support team coded the volunteers based on gender in order to ensure appropriate representation across the gender divide. The result was a well diverse group of twenty volunteers; twelve adults ranging between the ages of twenty-one and sixty-five, and eight teenagers between the ages of fourteen and seventeen. There were six adult males, six adult females, five teenaged males and three teenaged females.

The second step was to assign the volunteers to functional areas of support within the overall support team. Each volunteer was assigned to a primary support section with the option to assist other support sections as available or needed. This philosophy was employed in order to create trust between the researcher-to-support team-to-support team-to-researcher; everyone trusting everyone. "Trust is the emotional glue that binds followers and leaders together. The accumulation of trust is a measure of the legitimacy of leadership. It cannot be mandated or purchased; it must be earned."[1] A core focus, and synergy was created with the establishment of this philosophy. The implementation of it came with the challenge of dealing with the researcher's insecurity of non-academics contaminating the project. Determining organization is not equal to implementing trust. Executing trustworthiness within this process was a fear that did not go ignored or unaddressed, but it took courage to be placed into alignment.

[1] Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, *Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 2003), 142.

"Courage is an essential element of self-understanding and self-actualization, especially if one has been called or elected by God and the faith community to lead. It is the ability and willingness to put one's faith in action, to take risks with what one believes. It is best described as faith acted upon, rather than faith itself."[2] The researcher was required to maintain the aspect of practical faith while conducting this academic research.

The administrative support team ensured all consent forms, field notes, questionnaires and surveys were properly completed, organized and filed. The volunteers were required to complete consent forms that included confidentiality/non-disclosure agreements. Written, parental consent was gained for the volunteers that were seventeen years of age and younger. These individuals [non-adults] were not permitted to handle, or interact with sensitive materials or situations. This precaution was covered during the support team training sessions. The support team-trained adults completed the field notes, questionnaires and surveys, and teen volunteers were permitted to accompany them during administration of the interviews.

Community Contact Support

The community contact support team served as the face of this research project. These volunteers were the direct contact arm of the project tasked to engage the target population as representatives of hope, and not a Christian church. Individuals were assigned to this team based on their expressed interest to interact with the public. They completed the prerequisite training along with the other support team members. The specifics of their training will be covered in the "Training Support" subsection.

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[2] James Henry Harris, *The Courage to Lead: Leadership in the African American Urban Church* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002), 39.

It was of greater importance that the community contact support team enhanced the skills and techniques of basic communication and conflict resolution. There primary responsibility was to meet the participants within their [the participants] environment, and engage them in probing dialogue in order to gain insight to their [the participants] life. "Poor people have a distinct set of values, aspirations, beliefs, attitudes, dispositions, and psychological characteristics. These putative cultural traits and the style of life corresponding to them constitute a unique culture of poverty, one often conceived as the antithesis of mainstream culture."[3] This support team had to be aware of the cultural dynamics and nuisances of the project's context in order to be prepared for engagement. "Poverty is not only an economic problem and a political problem; it is also a cultural problem. We have the poverty we have in this country in part because of the beliefs and attitudes prevalent among the larger population. The poor are held hostage not only to the decisions of economic and political elites, but to the beliefs and opinions of the middle class as well."[4]

The community contact support team's primary responsibility was to deliver the ministry media to the residents weekly. The implementation strategy for the treatment hypothesis required that a DVD containing the message of hope be delivered to each residential unit on the designated properties. The team was instructed to use the clear, plastic bags provided with the DVD incased, and hang them upon each door within the complex. They also documented any resident that declined the media, or requested that it not be left at their location.

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[3] Edward Royce, *Poverty & Power: The Problem of Structural Inequality* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009), 49.

[4] Ibid., 158-159.

The analysis of how this data was calculated and used is discussed in the next section *Analysis of the* Data. The team documented each resident that responded in any way regarding the ministry media, and detailed their responses for compilation and analysis. Lastly, the team documented all units that were vacant, or that because vacant during the treatment hypothesis phase of this project. Again, the collection of this data was analyzed within the calculation process, and is further detailed in the following section.

Protocols were established by the community contact support team that ensured that the ministry media distributed were usable and viewable. Each week they sought to interact with all accessible residents in order to inquire their receipt of the media, and whether they were able to view it. All complaints were immediately documented, which included the residency and resident, and the media was replaced with another disc with the same message, plus the current week's message. The protocols permitted the team to verify that the proposed tool of media was the best option for reaching the impoverished located within this project's context.

The team executed the delivery of the media each week during the scheduled timeframe by which the pretest was administered. The intent was to establish a consistent schedule that would permit the community contact support team to possibly interact with the available residents, and ensure that the media was delivered. While the team remained consistent with its' schedule, the roster of volunteers distributing the media alternated. This alternation was intentional in order to prevent inappropriate relationships from being established, and therefore involving contamination to the project.

> The characteristics of the groups to which we belong influence our economic prospects. Group memberships matter in two ways. First, they contribute to the formation of what we normally think of as individual traits—our interests, preferences, beliefs, and abilities. Second, they determine our access to tangible resources, including opportunities for education, training, and employment. Group affiliations shape our aspirations and the means available to realize those aspirations. They affect both who we are and how we live our lives.[5]

Constant interaction with the same individuals over time would create bias relationship, and an influence that would prohibit the project's hypothesis from being accurately assessed. The participants were supposed to establish and nurture relationship with the message of hope. The instituted protocol of the alternated schedule of community contact personnel assisted in minimized the variable of improper relation within the project.

The community contact support team administered the pretest and the posttest for this project. Their preparation for this task included going out into the designated community complex prior to the administration date. The advanced reconnaissance allotted the team an opportunity to adequately assess the environment's possible risks, strengths and weaknesses. They went out during the proposed timeframe expected to conduct the pretest in order to assess the lighting conditions, parking locations and resident activity rate. One assessed risk was the remote pockets of non-residents gathered, and socializing in certain areas. This risk was mitigated by designating two teams of three persons each to engage those areas simultaneously, and unaggressive.

[5] Royce, 189.

"Our inability as Christians to reconcile loving God to loving our neighbor has done great harm to our claims that Jesus is the answer."[6] The team recalled from the training that their interaction might be with non-residents by which they were to employ simple, missionary techniques. The techniques referenced are briefly discussed in the training support team section of this study. During the administration of the pretest the team were able to compile field notes of their interactions, the responses [verbal and nonverbal] of the residents and all other observations deemed relevant to their tasks. The same procedures were employed for the posttest at the conclusion of the treatment hypothesis phase.

Production Support

The production support team was technologically dependent, and virtually remained isolated from the rest of the support team. Their sole responsibility was to facilitate and manage the development of the true ministry media for distribution. It was inclusive of filming, editing, duplicating, labeling and packaging the material, and maintaining the projected implementation timeline. The production support team invested the greatest amount of man-hours during this project due to the amount of technical information required to be applied. The preparation began with becoming familiar with all of the audio and video recording equipment, the lighting equipment and setup, the set design and setup, the product editing, DVD burning and labeling software, and the duplication equipment. User manuals accompanied all of the equipment and software.

[6] Spencer Perkins and Chris Rice, "Reconciliation: Loving God and Loving People," in *Restoring At-Risk Communities: Doing It Together & Doing It Right,* ed. John M. Perkins (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995), 110.

It was the position of this researcher that the media product would be of the best quality possible based upon the capabilities of the equipment available. It required the production support team to invest greater than four hours per week in order to accomplish this goal.

The product support team was responsible for learning, maintaining and operating: two Canon XH-A1 Camcorders, a Roland VR-3 Audio/Video mixer, two sets of Fancierstudio 3000 Watt Digital Video Continuous Softbox Lighting Kits, a Shure BLX188PG85M15 Dual PG185 Wireless Microphone System, two SATA CD/DVD/DVDRW Standalone Duplicators, a Sony VRD-MC6 DVDirect Compact Size DVD Burner with AVCHD Recording, an Apple MacBook Pro and an Apple MacBook Air, iMovie 9.0.8 Editing Software, miDVD Burning Software, and SnowFox Total Media Converter Software. The learning curve was tremendous as a result of the team not being technically trained in all of the aforementioned equipment, plus determining interfacing requirements, cable connections and figuring out the steps from start to finish. Additionally, the team was required to learn lighting positions and techniques, and sound enhancing and reduction techniques relative to the designated studio space. The entire preparation process required approximately three hundred man-hours of investment just to begin the media testing phase.

The media testing phase included the product support team conducting trial recordings of the researcher presenting messages of hope, in full segments, and going through the complete production process. One major challenge for the team was coordinating the appropriate studio time to record. The studio was located in an office building without soundproof insulation. The ambient noise from street traffic, building tenants and office mates made for poor quality recordings, and multiple distracts.

The next major challenge was syncing the researcher and team's schedules during a time when the ambient noise could be mitigated. The timeslots shifted numerous times from 7:00 P.M., 9:00 P.M., 11:00 P.M., 1:00 A.M., to 4:00 A.M. The final result was the product support team sharpening their technical expertise in order to enhance the vocal quality while reducing the ambient noise, and the researcher becoming more diligent and focused in presenting the material.

The exceptionally high number of man-hours required by the production team to develop a product of quality required an adjustment to the project timeline. The timeline was adjusted out by two months. It was scheduled for June implementation, but did not meet expectation until August. The specifics and entirety of this process are discussed in detail in the following section [The Implementation: Production Support].

Training Support

The training support team ensured that the entire support team for this project was adequately prepared for their assignments. Their primary focus was training the community contact support team, however, all other support teams were required to participate in the training as well. The team was comprised of college-educated professionals to include: a middle school teacher/administrator, a community organizer, a pastor emeritus and the researcher. The training support team conducted training sessions that covered basic communication skills, public interaction techniques, conflict resolution and academic research protocols. The investigation, compilation and presentation of this training required approximately one hundred and fifty man-hours to be invested.

The training support team conducted session on basic communication skills that focused primarily on oral communication. The team considered the fact that a large percentage of the residents of the designated property may have difficulty completing the written surveys. Hence, the entire support team was trained in the transfer of information as well as the receipt of information, verbally and nonverbally. The training covered: active listening skills—stop talking and listen openly to the other person, remove distractions, be receptive of the other person, maintain attentiveness; nonverbal communication—facial expressions and eye gazes, postures and gestures, voice infliction and tone, personal appearance; and questioning skills—closed ended questions, opened ended questions and leading questions. It also covered the skills of: knowing the audience and adapting the message—consider the demographics [age, gender, race], take into account their knowledge regarding the subject; speaking in the language that is understandable—use appropriate terminology, avoid slang, be intentional and specific with them point; being comfortable—accept that your nervousness is natural, acknowledge that your listener is nervous too, smiling will calm everyone. This training aided in the support team's effort to be as effective as possible.

The training support team researched and implemented training on public interaction techniques. They covered: Greet a prospected participant—Nobody wants to feel unwelcome or unappreciated. If they [the prospects] feel like outcasts, they will be less likely to help; Engage in conversation—People have a natural curiosity as to what you are all about. The best way to communicate this is to engage in simple conversation; Be courteous—Manners and interactions with others says a lot about a person's character.

Basic courtesy means you are socially well adjusted; Be positive—People naturally gravitate to others with a positive or upbeat personality; Be observant—Change is always around us so be able to spot the smallest of changes, be inquisitive and understand the rationale for the change; and, Be honest—Good interpersonal relations is trust.

The training support team conducted training that covered conflict resolution. Some of the key points discussed were: defining conflict, causes of conflict, resolutions for conflicts and personal conflicts. The goal of this training was to adequately inform and prepare the team member to defuse possible volatile situations that arose. It is the position of this researcher that most conflicts do not arise as a result of external factors, but of internal ones. The inability or lack of desire to accept behaviors or philosophies that are different would result in conflict. Volunteers were trained to not be easily offended by the actions, choices or words of the target population; maintain an opened mind in order to accurately record, or retain the target population's position; and to be nonaggressive in their interactions. "You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness."[7] The understanding that this project was an academic research opportunity, it was clearly communicated that this project and all of its' participants were representatives of Jesus Christ and His message of hope.

The most difficult task for the training team was the development of training material in academic research protocols. This was a difficulty because the workload rested on this researcher to create it. The team conducted an overview of defining a research degree and its' requirements, ethics, data protection and the legalities of confidentiality in academic researching this project.

[7] James 1:19-20.

It was explained that conducting academic research to the highest ethical standards is essential for both the researcher, personally, and the university. If the highest standards of ethical behavior were not maintained, then the researcher and the university could easily fall into disgrace.

In the development of the academic research protocol the researcher was required to clarify all thoughts and aspects related to the study in order for the training team to grasp, and implement it. This project possessed many parts that moved concurrently, so it required this researcher to serve as the guide or manager instead of the actual implementer. The training team operated as the checks and balances arm to ensure that the complete support team flowed according to this project's intent and vision. It was overly emphasized that violations of the established protocols would discredit the entire study.

The training team facilitated the support team's understanding of an adequate project summary; the project's description: rationale, objective(s), general methodology, data management and analysis; and the project's vitality to its' context. The team developed Rules of Engagement for the safety of the support team, and their interactions with the context participants. As mentioned earlier, the quantitative surveys and the qualitative interviews were to be conducted by the support team operating under the direct supervision of the researcher, and in accordance with the Rules of Engagement. The objective was to interact with the heads of household for each unit on the designated properties in pursuit of a target metric of at least ten percent of the adult occupants living in low-income housing.

At the conclusion of the term of six to twelve weeks this researcher was to administer a posttest consisting of the same pretest format with slightly modified questions. It was to reflect the solicitation of data for comparative analysis, and to verify triangulation. It was this project's intent to clearly conclude that the Christian message of hope shared via media ministry is effective [verifiable attitude change]. It was the position of this researcher that a percentage of the project participants would be encouraged and optimistic for an improved life without noticeable changes in their circumstances. Additionally, it was this project's intent to clearly conclude that the Christian message of hope shared via media ministry is transformative [verifiable behavior change]. It was the position of this researcher that a percentage of the project participants would commit or re-commit their lives to Christ, and display a recognizable behavior change.

The Implementation

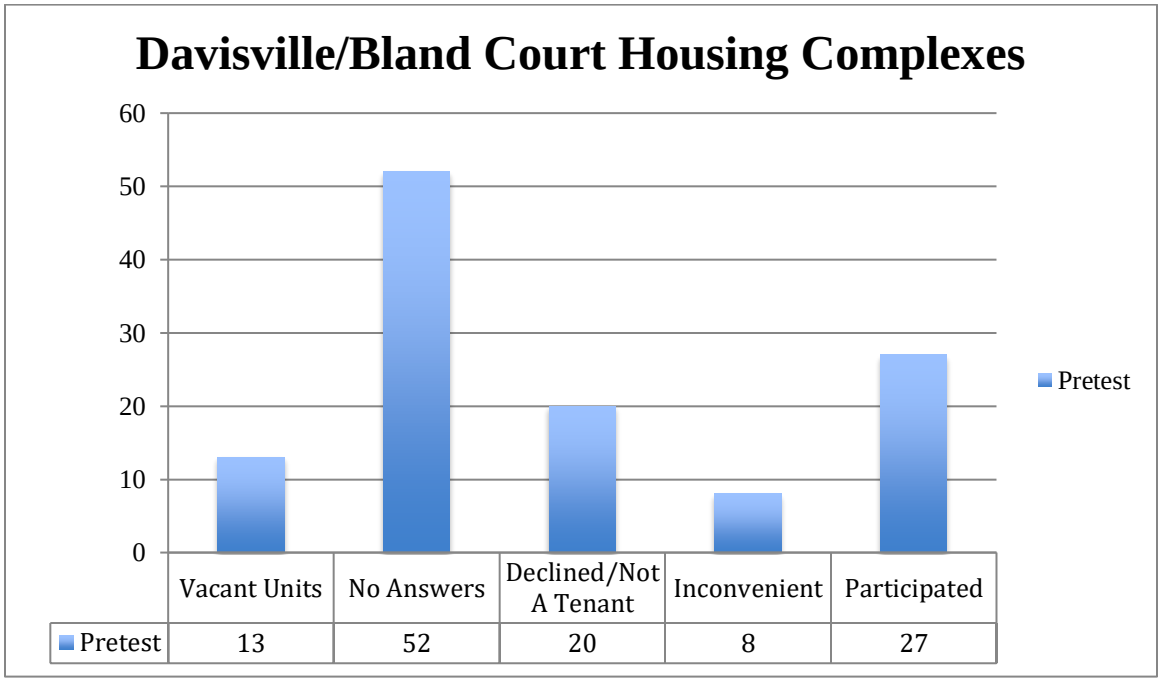
The Pretest

This study commenced on Wednesday, July 23, 2014 with the administration of the pretest. The community contact team comprised of seven volunteers and the researcher preassembled at 2:30 P.M., and reviewed the Rules of Engagement. Next, volunteers was paired, provided twenty-five copies of the quantitative survey and twenty-five copies of the qualitative interview questionnaire, two clipboards, pencils/pens and a printed script to aid in their interactions. After fielding concerns or questions the team converged on the Davisville and Bland Court Housing Complexes.

The Davisville Complex has one hundred apartment and townhome units, and Bland Court Housing Complex has twenty apartment and townhome units for a total of one hundred and twenty families to engage. The properties were interconnected which provided ease for area and personnel management.

The Community Contact Support Team arrived at the designated site at approximately 4:00 P.M.; the weather was sunny with a temperature of about 82 degrees Fahrenheit. The complex was active with children playing outside and some adults socializing outside of their apartments, or in transition completing errands. The team was adorned in casual clothes, and comfortable footwear. They [the team] were assigned areas of the complex with a specific number of residential buildings to survey. The target number for completed surveys was twelve, representative of ten percent of the residential population of one hundred and twenty units. However, it was conveyed that the greater the response rate received would be more advantageous for development of the treatment hypothesis protocol. The team was also reminded to maximize opportunities to complete the qualitative interview questionnaire if feasible.

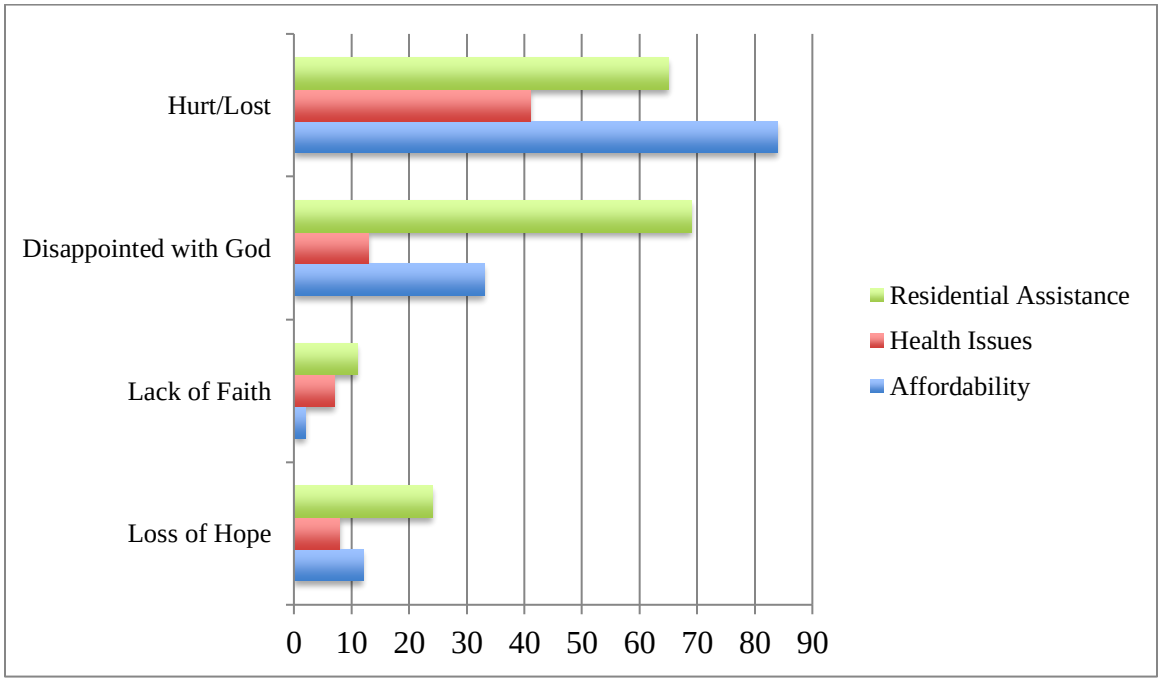
The following is a graphic depiction of the pretest responses:



Context Response Assessment (Pretest)
Figure 5.

The data recorded that there were thirteen vacant units; fifty-two units whose residents did not answered the door; fourteen unit residents declined to participate and six responded that they were not the resident of that unit, and the resident was unavailable; eight unit residents stated that it was an inconvenient time to participate; and twenty-seven unit residents participated. There was a twenty-two and one-half percent participation in the pretest of which one hundred percent of the participants completed the quantitative survey and qualitative interview. This exceeded the baseline target of ten percent participation by twelve and one-half percent. As a result of the unexpected, high level of participation during the pretest the support team decided to invest the additional time into the development of the treatment hypothesis instead of advancing the project's timeline.

This project was developed to assess the needs of the target population and develop the message of hope for them within their current positions. In order for this to be accomplished the researcher and the support team identified recurring themes within the responses from the qualitative interviews. This will be discussed in further detail in the next section, *Analysis of Data*; however, the following is an overview of the results from those interviews as an initial analysis for development of the treatment hypothesis:



Initial Analysis for Treatment Hypothesis Development
Figure 6.

The cross-comparison of the participants that cited in their interviews that residential assistance was their primary reason for remaining in low-income housing, it revealed that sixty-nine percent were *Disappointed with* God and sixty-five percent were *Hurt or* Lost. It is important to highlight that some of the participants that identified as being disappointed with God are also hurt or lost. It is this researcher's position that these individuals have fallen far beyond possessing a loss of hope.

They could be displaying characteristics of clinical depression. Having a licensed, psychological professional evaluate these participants, and provide a diagnosis can only prove this assumption. However, for the scope of this project the researcher classified these participants as possessing a severe loss of hope. The collected data further conveyed that eleven percent of the participants identified with possessing a lack of faith as a primary reason for remaining in low-income housing, and twenty-four percent cited a loss of hope as their reason. Predicated on this initial analysis of the data the treatment hypothesis plan was developed, and implemented. A more detailed discussion of the quantitative survey and qualitative interview analysis will be covered in the follow section *Analysis of Data*. The community contact team completed the pretest administration at approximately 8:30 P.M., compiled all completed surveys, questionnaires and field notes, and concluded this phase of the implementation.

The Treatment Hypothesis

The treatment hypothesis of this project was built upon six primary assumptions. Those assumptions were that low-income families: Possessed access to and utilized basic television channels and services; Possessed access to and utilized local television channels and services; Possessed access to and utilized local radio stations; Possessed access to and utilized CDs and DVDs players; Were more receptive to initial, spiritual enrichment presented within their comfort/private areas (Home, vehicles, etc.) prior to it being presented in an open/public area (Church worship services, special events, etc.); and Were willing to consciously make life-enhancing changes as a direct result of consistent, spiritual encouragement.

Based upon the initial analysis of the pretest data it was confirmed that the usage of video media as the tool of treatment hypothesis implementation would be the best approach.

The researcher worked with the production support team and transformed a medium-sized office into a small television studio. The set was comprised of three wood oak bookcase with books, and two artificial ficus trees as the backdrop. A dark, wood oak executive desk, and black leather executive chair were props. The production support team arranged the lighting based upon their research suggestions with one backlight, four sidelights staggered on the left and right sides, and three front lights. Four of the light sets used light filters to soften the lighting, and reduce the glare reflecting from the researcher's skin. Two Canon cameras were set up to produce a two-shot program; each directly wired into the Roland VR-3 Audio/Video Switcher. The researcher wore a Shure BLX188PG85M15 Dual PG185 Wireless microphone for the capture of the vocal audio; the receiver of the wireless system was directly connected to the Roland VR-3 Audio/Video Switcher, where the audio and video merged. The amalgamated material was routed from the switcher to the Sony VRD-MC6 DVDirect Compact Size DVD Burner, and this is where the raw footage was created. The production support team's studio crew coordinated technical and set adjustments, camera operations and control board functions. Once the raw footage was created it was forwarded to the production support team's editing crew. Each session required approximately three man-hours.

The editing crew was responsible for validating the raw footage prior to engaging in the editing process. Playing the raw footage DVD on a normal DVD player or system, and television completed this. If the audio or video was distorted, it was advised to access option for correcting the perceived issue.

All unresolvable issues required the segment to be refilmed. Validated footage was loaded onto the Apple MacBook Pro or Apple MacBook Air, converted into an editing format with the SnowFox Media Software, manipulated and adjusted for production with iMovie, stored to an internal hard drive, and burned to a master copy disc via miDVD software. The editing crew created a template broadcast that included the intro and outro for the program. The complete editing process required approximately four man-hours for each thirty minute to forty-five minute segment. Once completed the final product is transferred to the labeling and duplication crew for conclusion of the process.

The labeling and duplication crew utilized the master copy disc to duplicate one hundred and twenty DVDs [one disc for each residential unit at Davisville/Bland Court Complexes] for distribution. This was accomplished by two SATA CD/DVD/DVDRW Standalone Duplicators, which produced five copied DVDs per unit. DVD labels with adhesive were printed with the media ministry content information, applied to the discs, placed in individual cases and plastic sleeves, then stored for distribution. This process required approximately two man-hours to complete. The full treatment hypothesis, from start to finish, required approximately nine man-hours to complete.

The content of the media ministry was important in order to reach the poor and downtrodden in their place of despair, and give accessibility to the message of hope that would advance them. This researcher leveraged the initial analysis from the pretest data in the creation of the media content.

The following list the messages of hope, and their scriptural reference:

Message Title:	Scripture Reference:
Overcome Obstacles of Faith	James 1: 2 – 4 New Century Version
Build An Effective Prayer Life	Luke 18: 1 – 18 New Century Version
Live A Better Life	Titus 3: 1 – 7 New Century Version
Recognize Your Potential	John 14: 11 – 14 New Century Version
Unlock Your Potential	Luke 17: 3 – 4 The Message Bible
Unlock Your Potential, Part 2	Luke 17: 3 – 4 The Message Bible

Treatment Hypothesis: Messages of Hope
Figure 7.

The message titles were constructed to empower and provide hope prior to the media being played. It has always been this researcher's opinion that the title of a homily, message or sermon is the thesis of the presentation. The justification of this position has been because the majority of presentations are roughly twenty-five to forty-five minutes in delivery, and an extreme amount of content is given during that time which could make retention difficult. The thesis as the title means that the main focus, or point of the message is introduced first giving the listener opportunity to build the remainder of what they receive from the message upon this foundation. It is the belief of this researcher that these messages of hope, and others that connect to the poor within their context are effective [produce positive attitudinal changes], and transformative [produce positive behavioral changes].

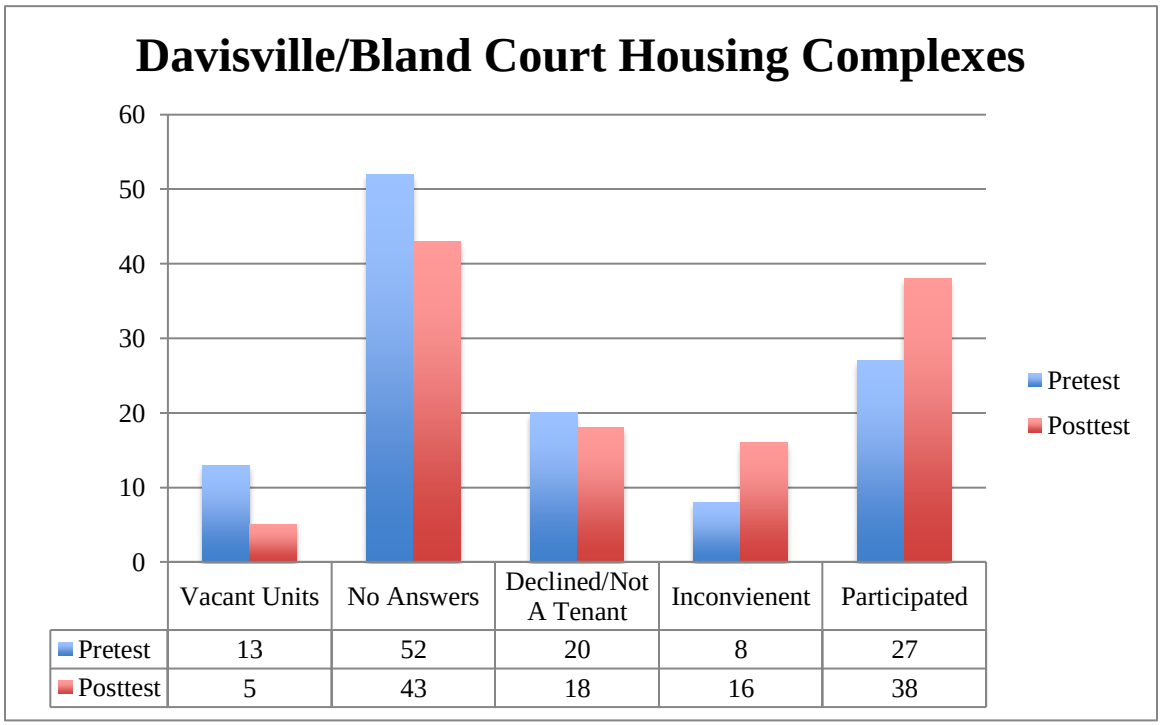
In conclusion the original treatment hypothesis plan called for the distribution of the ministry media to those participants of the pretest.

It implied that those residents were receptive to the opportunity to participate. But, a re-evaluation of the research question revealed that there was not a determined factor to prove or disprove that the message of hope shared by media was effective. There was not a variable to compare; hence, it was decided, and adjusted for the media to be distributed to one hundred percent of the target population instead of limit it to the twenty-two and one-half percent who participated in the pretest. This added variable provided the study with eight-one and one-half percent of the target population that did not participant's unknown input, and possible response or lack thereof to be include into the research. One hundred and twenty messages of hope media discs were delivered on Wednesdays—October 8; October 15; October 22; October 29; November 5; and November 12, 2014—between the hours of approximately 4:30 P.M. – 6:30 P.M. weekly.

The Posttest

The Community Contact Support Team administered the quantitative survey and qualitative interview posttest on November 19, 2014 between the hours of 4:00 P.M. – 6:30 P.M. The weather was hazy with a cloudy overcast and temperature of roughly 48 degrees Fahrenheit. There were only a few residents outside socializing or conducting errands, and smaller number of children, in comparison to the pretest assessment, played outside. The team was dressed with large, insulated coats, hats and scarves in order to protect from the cold, harsh environment that seemed to become colder minute-by-minute. The identical Rules of Engagement applied, and a slightly modified script was employed in order to effectively communicate the team's intent and retrieve any available information.

They [the team] were assigned areas of the complex with a specific number of residential buildings to survey. The target number for completed surveys was twelve, just as with the pretest, representative of ten percent of the residential population of one hundred and twenty units. However, it was also conveyed that the greater the responses received would be more advantageous for assessment of the treatment hypothesis. The team was also reminded to maximize opportunities to complete the qualitative interview questionnaire if feasible. The following is a graphic depiction of the pretest responses:



	Vacant Units	No Answers	Declined/Not A Tenant	Inconvienent	Participated
Pretest	13	52	20	8	27
Posttest	5	43	18	16	38

Context Response Assessment (Posttest)
Figure 8.

The data recorded that there were five vacant units; forty-three units whose residents did not answered the door; fifteen unit residents declined to participate and three responded that they were not the resident of that unit, and the resident was unavailable; sixteen unit residents stated that it was an inconvenient time to participate; and thirty-eight unit residents participated.

There was a twenty-two and one-half percent participation in the pretest, and thirty-two percent participation in the posttest of which one hundred percent of the participants completed the quantitative survey and qualitative interview. This exceeded the baseline target of ten percent participation by twenty-two percent, and was an increase participation of nine percent. The details of the full analysis will be discussed in the next section, *Analysis of Data*.

The Analysis of Data

The Pretest Data

The Quantitative Tool — Life Focus Survey

The quantitative tool [Life Focus Survey] was created based on the researcher's assumptions, literature reviews and interactions with community, context residents. This project's position is that the absence of the Christian church being active, consistent and visible in low-income and impoverished communities is equal to the absence of hope from that same community. The Church has been deemed a violator by the poor and disenfranchised. The pretest *Life Focus Survey* supports this theory, and the qualitative tool [Life Focus Interview Questionnaire] further confirms this stance. In order to reconnect the marginalized with the message of hope, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, this project employed media ministry its' tool. It presented the opportunity for the people to identify with the message of hope, the messenger of God [the researcher], and most importantly, God.

The quantitative tool was a one-page, fifteen question evaluation that required a "Yes" or "No" response. It was used to gain an overview of the target population. An analysis of the *Life Focus Survey* pretest provided the following information:

1. Are you happy living in your apartment?

Sixty-seven percent of the participants responded as being happy, and thirty-three percent responded as not being happy. The term *happy* was not defined or restricted in any sense. The participant was required to use their definition, and understanding without guidance or influence from the researcher or support team. Many of the participants cited their reason for being *happy* as being close to family, friends and people that they have known for a lifetime. Others are not happy as a result of their feeling restricted to not having activities and services for the children and elderly that private, multi-family housing complexes enjoy.

2. Will you ever move out of your apartment?

Eighty percent of the participants responded that they will move out of their apartment, and twenty percent responded that they would never move. Of the twenty percent they shared their reason is due to a lack of financial stability, or the ability to acquire better employment to support themselves and their family.

3. Do you have a TV?

Ninety-six percent of the participants do own a television while four percent do not. Several participants noted that they owned a television, but seldom watching it because of work and family obligations.

4. Do you have a DVD player/Laptop?

Eighty percent affirmed owning a DVD player/Laptop, and twenty percent responded as not having either.

5. Do you currently work?

One participant abstained from answering this question. Of the remaining participants there were fifty percent employed, and fifty percent unemployed.

6. Are you looking for a better job?

Fifty-nine percent were looking for a better job, and forty-one percent were not interested.

7. Is HRHA Management helping you?

Twenty-eight percent believe that HRHA Management is helping them, while seventy-two percent do not believe that they are helping.

8. Are you getting enough assistance?

Forty-two percent feel that they are receiving enough assistance, and fifty-eight feel that they are in need of greater assistance. The term *assistance* was not defined or restricted in any sense. The participant was required to use their definition, and understanding without guidance or influence from the researcher or support team.

9. Do you believe in God?

One hundred percent of participants believe in God.

10. Do you attend a church?

Three participants abstained from answering this question. Of the remaining participants there were fifty percent who attend church, and fifty percent who do not attend church.

11. Would you go to a church for help?

Two participants abstained from answering this question. Of the remaining participants there were fifty-two percent that would seek out a church for help, and forty-eight would not ask a church for help. The term *help* was not defined or restricted in any sense. The participant was required to use their definition, and understanding without guidance or influence from the researcher or support team.

12. Has a church helped you in the past?

Three participants abstained from answering this question. Of the remaining participants thirty-seven percent responded that they have received help from a church in the past, and sixty-three percent have not received help from a church. The term *help* was not defined or restricted in any sense. The participant was required to use their definition, and understanding without guidance or influence from the researcher or support team.

13. Do you want a better life for you and your family?

Three participants abstained from answering this question. Of the remaining participants ninety-six percent want a better life, and four percent do not desire a better life. The term *better* was not defined or restricted in any sense. The participant was required to use their definition, and understanding without guidance or influence from the researcher or support team.

14. Will you be happy with life if nothing changes?

Three participants abstained from answering this question. Of the remaining participants forty-six percent responded that they would be happy if nothing changes, and fifty-four percent expect some type of change.

The term *happy* was not defined or restricted in any sense. The participant was required to use their definition, and understanding without guidance or influence from the researcher or support team.

15. Do you pray or read the Bible?

Three participants abstained from answering this question. Of the remaining participants eighty-seven and one-half percent read their Bible or pray while twelve and one-half percent do not read their Bible or pray.

This survey was administered to adult residents of the units. It was a requirement that the one interviewed was a tenant on the lease, and preferably the head of the household. There were eighty-nine percent female participants, and eleven percent male participants in this pretest study. Questions 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 13 and 14 assessed the participant's perception as it related to their current position, and future expectations. The pretest revealed that fifty-seven percent of the participants possessed a positive self-perception of themselves and their abilities. Question 1 indicated that the residents have determined that their present residential accommodations were achieved by their own actions, and that they are pleased with those actions. Question 2 revealed that the vast majority of the participants believed that that they would move to another place of residency. Unfortunately these indications point to self-deception because while eighty percent expected to relocate out of low-income housing fifty percent reported being unemployed with an alarming forty-one percent reported as *not looking* for a better job. Ninety-six percent of those surveyed reported a desire for a better life for they and their families, and fifty-four percent claimed that happiness would not be achievable if their lives did not encounter *positive* change.

The self-deception was further confirmed based on the fifty-eight percent who reported not getting enough assistance, and an interestingly seventy-two percent that believed that the residential management agency *is not helping* them. This accountability for advancement has been wrongly defined as, and misdirected at being an institutional or organizational responsibility instead of a personal responsibility. This finding lends to the conclusion that the impoverished living in low-income public housing do not have, or have lost hope.

The target population's dependence is on the economical, governmental and social systems, and simply identifying with the spiritual. One hundred percent of the participants reported believing in God and eighty-seven and one-half percent answered that they pray or read the Bible. Only fifty percent of the participants attend a church and fifty-two percent would go to a church for help. However, sixty-two and one-half percent reported to have never been helped by a church. There is a greater belief in a God that is not connected to, or represented by a church, than of the God that is connected to, and represented by it. This finding suggests that marginalized and oppressed individuals believe that any entity or organization that comes to their rescue, and meets their needs are God-sent. The government offices and programs remain active and present within low-income communities by providing numerous assistance programs on a consistent basis. The Christian church is not active and present for the poor and disenfranchised on any consistent or daily basis, and does not meet the needs of the poor.

For example, the Christian church supplies a meal to *needy* families on Thanksgiving Day, but the government provides sustenance assistance to those same families on a monthly basis. This finding contributed to the conclusion that the Christian church is considered a larcenist of faith, and pilferager of hope in God due to its' absence and inactivity.

The Qualitative Tool — Life Focus Interview Questionnaire

The qualitative tool [Life Focus Interview Questionnaire] was created to build upon the quantitative tool, and to establish a greater understanding of the target population. It was comprised of fifteen, opened-ended questions with some possessing listed follow-on questions for exact detailing. Additionally, this tool permitted the researcher to identify recurring themes in the lives of the target population. An analysis of the *Life Focus Interview Questionnaire* pretest conveyed useful data. The following questions returned responses:

1. a.) How long have you lived in public housing?

Ninety-six percent of the participants responded, and one participant abstained. The average time living in public house was a little more than thirteen years ranging from less than one year to more than forty years. The participants were required to account for the time in which they lived in other public housing complexes in other areas also. Those that used the Section 8 benefits, and lived in single family houses were not required to account for that time.

b.) How long have you lived in this [Davisville/Band Court] apartment complex?

Forty-one percent of the participants have lived in the Davisville/Bland Court Housing Complexes for an average of eight years. It ranged from less than one year to above twenty-one years.

c.) What is the main reason that you are living in public housing?

Eighty-nine percent of the participants responded to this question. Eight percent cited health related issues; twelve and one-half percent reported that they transferred from another public housing complex; twenty-one percent stated the need and availability of family support; and fifty-four percent declared economic benefit and feasibility.

2. a.) Do you want to move out of public housing?

Ninety-six percent of the participants responded. Eighty-five percent of those who responded possess a desire to move out of public housing. Ten percent noted that it was too dangerous living in public housing, and twenty-three percent cited a better quality of life as their reason for wanting to move. Fifteen percent do not want to relocate out of public housing because of a lack of money, and eight percent cited not wanting to leave the only place that they have known.

b.) Do you have a plan?

Fifty-six percent responded to this question. Only twenty percent reported possessing a plan to facilitate their transition. The other eighty percent expressed the desire to move out, however, they do not have any idea of how to make that happen. Timelines were expressed for moving, but when inquired as to how they were going to accomplish it several responses were “I don’t know yet. It will happen how it happens.”

3. a) How many days per week do you watch TV?

One hundred percent of the participants responded. Sixty-three percent reported watching TV for six days or more; eleven percent reported watching TV three to five days; twenty-two percent watch it three days or less; and four percent do not watch TV at all.

c.) Do you ever watch Christian channels/programming/shows?

Seventy-eight percent responded to this question. Of the responses eighty-one percent reported watching Christian channels, programming or shows, and nineteen percent reported as not watching any Christian channels, programming or shows.

4. a.) How frequently do you watch DVDs?

One hundred percent of the participants responded to this question. Forty-five percent reported sporadically watching DVDs because they usually watch local television channels; thirty-three percent cited never watching DVDs because they are usually busy, or do not think about it; and twenty-two percent watch DVDs frequently because they do not have access to cable or dish television services.

b.) What type (genres) of DVDs do you watch most?

Forty-one percent responded to this question. Forty-five percent reported watching comedy, twenty-seven percent cited action or drama respectfully, and one percent stated cartoons, horror and other genres. None interviewed named Christian programming.

c.) Would you watch a Christian program or worship service if available?

Sixty-three percent responded to this question. Twenty-nine percent responded that they would not watch Christian DVDs if made available to them while seventy-one percent stated that they would.

These statistics concerned the researcher based on the percentage that responded, and the significant percentage that admitted that they would not watch Christian DVDs if available.

5. How long have you been employed or unemployed?

Eighty-five percent responded to this question. Only nine percent have been employed for more than five years; thirteen percent were unemployed for four years or less; thirty-four percent were employed for less than five years with half being employed less than one year; and forty-four percent chose not to answer their length of employment.

6. Do you feel that you qualify for better employment? Why or why not?

One hundred percent of the participants responded to this question. Twenty-six percent believed that they do not qualify for better employment; thirty-three percent did not answer and forty-one percent agreed that they are qualified for better employment opportunities. Twenty-five percent of the participants who responded indicated having been trained and certified in designated employment fields while an equal percentage reported being untrained. The remaining fifty percent relayed health issues, childcare challenges and the lack of job training for not qualifying for better employment.

7. Do you feel that HRHA is helping to make your life easier or harder? Explain.

One hundred percent of the participants responded. Forty-eight percent cited that HRHA has made their life more difficult while forty-one percent reported their lives are enhanced by HRHA. Eleven percent stated that HRHA neither helped nor hurt them. The recurring theme from those who were enhanced by HRHA was that thirty-six percent cited affordability/low rent as the only enhancement.

However, of those that feel HRHA made their lives harder thirty-six percent reported poor support services, eighteen percent were unhappy with the facilities and maintenance, and ten percent believed that HRHA management does not invest enough into resident assistance programs.

8. Do the City, State and/or Federal governments provide enough assistance to help you get back on your feet?

One hundred percent of the participants answered this question. Of the responses there were forty-four percent who reported they received enough assistance, thirty-seven percent stated they do not receive enough assistance and nineteen percent were unsure that they receive enough or do not receive enough assistance. Twenty percent claimed to be comfortable in their present circumstances, coupled with an additional twenty percent who reported simply not trying to get on their feet. Fifteen percent believed it to not be their responsibility to help themselves, but for "the people down at Social Services ought to help" makes for fifty-five percent of the pretested participants to be stuck in poverty.

9. Do you sometimes feel depressed because of your hardships?

One hundred percent of the participants responded to this question. Twenty-two percent declined to elaborate on this subject, forty-one percent admitted to being depressed while thirty-seven percent cited not being depressed. The researcher or the support team did not define or restrict the definition of *depression*. It was required for the participant to define based on their understand. Eighty percent reported being depressed on a daily basis while twenty percent cited being depressed sometimes. Sixty-two percent believed that things would never get any better for them [absence of hope] while thirty-eight percent believed that better days were ahead.

10. How frequently do you attend church? If you do not attend, why not?

One hundred percent of the participants responded to this question. Eleven percent declined to answer; fifteen percent reported attending weekly; eighteen percent cited attending monthly; and fifty-six percent declared never attending. Twelve and one-half percent explained the need for appropriate clothes to wear to church is why they do not attend, twenty-five percent cited transportation issues as the inhibitor and sixty-two and one half percent were unsure why they never attend church.

11. How do you feel about Christians/church people?

One hundred percent of the participants responded to this question. Forty-one percent declined to answer, twenty-two percent stated not having an opinion, nineteen percent feel them to be "O.K." and eighteen percent believed they are "hypocritical."

12. Do you think that hearing a sermon frequently will help you?

One hundred percent of the participants responded to this question. Fifty-nine percent declined to answer or were unsure, forty-one percent affirmed that it would help, but there were no denials that it would not help. Fifty percent declared that sermons help to give encouragement and to lift their spirits, and the other fifty percent simply wanted another perspective by which to address life. Sixty-eight percent believed that attending church regularly would help because it is a "positive place", while thirty-two percent cited needing a relationship with God as the reason that it would help them.

13. What do you need to make your life better?

One hundred percent of the participants responded to this question. Thirty-three percent cited a need of money to improve their lives; twenty-six percent required jobs to advance their lives; fifteen percent declined to answer; seven percent each, respectfully reported a need to focus and of being unsure to make their lives better; and four percent each, cited a need for God, school or training and companionship to enhance their lives.

14. Do you think that praying helps your situation?

One hundred percent of the participants responded to this question. Thirty percent declined to answer, however, seventy percent believed that prayer helped situations and there were no record of anyone denying that prayer was beneficial. Sixty percent reported praying on a daily basis while forty percent stated praying multiple times during a day. This was very uplifting for the researcher considering the high percentage of participants who reported being unwilling to watch a Christian DVD. But, of the same group no one was outwardly against spiritual communications.

15. If you received a free DVD with a sermon or worship serviced recorded on it, would you watch it?

One hundred percent of the participants responded to this question. Four percent reported unwilling to watch a free Christian DVD simply because they are not interested; eleven percent declined to answer whether they would watch it or not, and eight-five percent stated that they would watch a free Christian DVD.

An analysis of this data revealed that the hypothesis of this researcher is true, and that those living in low-income housing have lost hope. This is supported by the averaged length of time the participants have lived in public house [over thirteen years].

It is also confirmed by the averaged amount of time participants have lived in the project's context [just over eight years]. The patterns established through this qualitative tool convey that the loss of hope resulted from family and financial hardships. Twenty-two percent moved to, and remain in low-income housing due to family support requirements while fifty-four percent were there due to affordability. With eighty-five percent of those who participated possessing a desire to move out of public housing, but an almost equal eighty percent not having a viable plan to implement this goal further solidifies this researcher's position. The inactive and nonvisible Christian church prevents the message of hope from reaching the marginalized, and leaves the downtrodden, poor community absent of direction, encouragement, guidance and hope. The data indicates that eighteen percent of the target population views the Christian church as "hypocritical" and "just like everybody else." The practical assistance that they receive comes from, and remains on the government systems active in their environment.

In conclusion, these findings suggest that the poor desire encouragement and hope from God. The blockade is their [the poor's] perception of the Christian church. The disenfranchised remain opened to God, opened to prayer, opened to church as a place of gathering, and opened to doing better in life. Many of them are unsure as to why they do not attend church, but seek for indications of salvation while battling depression and hopelessness. It is the belief of this researcher that the messages of hope delivered via media will connect to the poor within their context, and is effective [produce positive attitudinal changes], and transformative [produce positive behavioral changes].

The Posttest Data

The Quantitative Tool — Life Focus Survey

The qualitative tool [Life Focus Survey] served similar purposes in the posttest as it did in the pretest. In addition to providing a general overview of the target population's position, it also provided a point of reference for comparison. This tool was comprised of fifteen, closed-ended "Yes" or "No" questions with some being slightly modified from the pretest. The intent was to determine which data points would remain consistent, as well as to determine if the researcher's theory holds true. The following analysis is a result of the posttest data:

1. Are you happy living in your apartment?

Seventy-two percent of the participants responded as being happy, and twenty-eight percent responded as not being happy. The term *happy* was not defined or restricted in any sense. The participant was required to use their definition, and understanding without guidance or influence from the researcher or support team.

2. Will you ever move out of your apartment?

Seventy percent of the participants responded that they will move out of their apartment, and thirty percent responded that they would never move.

3. Have you been receiving the free DVDs?

Ninety-seven percent of the participants did receive the free DVDs while only three percent did not.

4. Did you watch any of the DVDs?

Forty-five percent responded as having watched the media, and fifty-five percent did not watch it.

5. Do you currently work?

Two participants abstained from answering this question. Of the remaining participants there were thirty-one percent employed, and sixty-nine percent unemployed.

6. Are you looking for a better job?

Forty-one percent were looking for a better job, and fifty-nine percent were not interested.

7. Is HRHA Management helping you?

Sixty-one percent believe that HRHA Management is helping them, while thirty-nine percent do not believe that they are being helped. Five participants declined to answer.

8. Are you getting enough assistance?

Sixty-two percent feel that they are receiving enough assistance, and thirty-eight feel that they are in need of greater assistance. The term *assistance* was not defined or restricted in any sense. The participant was required to use their definition, and understanding without guidance or influence from the researcher or support team.

9. Do you believe in God?

One hundred percent of participants believe in God.

10. Do you attend a church?

Sixty-one percent attend church, and thirty-nine percent do not attend church.

11. Would you go to a church for help?

Two participants abstained from answering this question. Of the remaining participants there were eighty-nine percent that would seek out a church for help, and eleven would not ask a church for help. The term *help* was not defined or restricted in any sense. The participant was required to use their definition, and understanding without guidance or influence from the researcher or support team.

12. Has a church helped you in the past?

One participant abstained from answering this question. Of the remaining participants fifty-four percent responded that they have received help from a church in the past, and forty-six percent have not received help from a church. The term *help* was not defined or restricted in any sense. The participant was required to use their definition, and understanding without guidance or influence from the researcher or support team.

13. Do you want a better life for you and your family?

Ninety-seven percent want a better life, and three percent do not desire a better life. The term *better* was not defined or restricted in any sense. The participant was required to use their definition, and understanding without guidance or influence from the researcher or support team.

14. Will you be happy with life if nothing changes?

Seventy-four percent responded that they would be happy if nothing changes, and twenty-six percent expect some type of change. The term *happy* was not defined or restricted in any sense. The participant was required to use their definition, and understanding without guidance or influence from the researcher or support team.

15. Do you pray or read the Bible?

One hundred percent attested that they read their Bible or pray.

This survey was administered to adult residents of the units. It was a requirement that the one interviewed was a tenant on the lease, and preferably the head of the household. There were eighty-two percent female participants, and eighteen percent male participants in this pretest study. Questions 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 13 and 14 assessed the participant's perception as it related to their current position, and future expectations. The posttest revealed that eighty-six percent of the participants possessed a positive self-perception of themselves and their abilities. Question 1 was consistent in that it detailed that the residents have determined that their present residential accommodations were achieved by their own actions, and that they were pleased with those actions. This was quantified by the seventy-two percent who declared they were happy with their apartment. Question 2 was also consistent in that it revealed that the vast majority of the participants believed that that they would move to another place of residency. Unfortunately, it appeared that the indications of self-deception remained. Seventy percent expected to relocate out of low-income housing, however sixty-nine percent reported being unemployed with an alarming fifty-nine percent reported as *not looking* for a better job. Ninety-seven percent of those surveyed reported a desire for a better life for they and their families, but seventy-four percent claimed that happiness would be achievable if their lives did not encounter *positive* change. This statistic indicates the presence of *hope* in an impoverished, unchanged situation.

The self-deception was further reduced based on the sixty-two percent who reported that their current assistance was *enough* assistance, and an interestingly sixty-one percent that believed that the residential management agency *is helping* them. This posttest has revealed an enormous change in perception, and more specifically accountability for the responsibility of advancement. The data indicates that a greater percentage of the poor and marginalized accepted responsibility for their position, and more importantly, their progress. This finding lends to the conclusion that the impoverished living in low-income public housing have gained access to, or possess hope.

The target population's dependence is not on the economical, governmental and social systems but have identified with and began pursuit of the spiritual systems grounded in the Christian faith. One hundred percent of the participants reported believing in God, and answered that they pray or read the Bible. Sixty-one percent of the participants attend a church and eighty-nine percent would go to a church for help. The presence of, and access to the message of hope has translated into a greater belief in a God that *may be* connected to, or represented by a church. Taking into consideration that the Christian church remained inactive and invisible, but the message of hope was accessible and relevant to the poor, the perception of the Church changed, and the relationship with God increased. This finding suggests that marginalized and oppressed individuals believed that the message of hope came to their rescue, and met them in their place of need, and empowered them to seek for a better existence.

It [the finding] contributed to the conclusion that the posttest data displayed noticeable and significant changes in the target population. It is the position of this researcher that the changes are a direct result of the messages of hope being delivered via media to the low-income residents of this project's context.

The Qualitative Tool — Life Focus Interview Questionnaire

The qualitative tool [Life Focus Interview Questionnaire] served similar purposes as in the pretest, and it also provided a point of reference of comparison and validation. It was comprised of ten, opened-ended questions with some possessing follow-on questions for clarity and understanding. The following is the data analysis gained:

1. a.) How long have you lived in public housing?

Ninety percent of the participants responded, and four participants abstained. The average time living in public house was a little more than twelve years ranging from less than one month to more than *sixty-two* years. The participants were required to account for the time in which they lived in other public housing complexes in other areas also. Those that used the Section 8 benefits, and lived in single family houses were not required to account for that time.

b.) How long have you lived in this [Davisville/Band Court] apartment complex?

Eighty-four percent of the participants have lived in the Davisville/Bland Court Housing Complexes for an average of eight and one-half years. It ranged from less than one month to above twenty-two years.

c.) What is the main reason that you are living in public housing?

Sixty-eight percent of the participants responded to this question. Eight percent equally cited health related issues as well as being “unsure”; fifteen percent stated the need and availability of family support; thirty-one percent reported it as a means of convenience; and thirty-eight percent declared economic benefit and feasibility [affordability].

2. a.) Do you want to move out of public housing?

Ninety percent of the participants responded. Seventy-nine percent of those who responded possess a desire to move out of public housing. Twelve percent noted that it was too dangerous living in public housing, and thirty-three percent cited a better quality of life as their reason for wanting to move. Eighteen percent do not want to relocate out of public housing because of a lack of money, and three percent cited being unsure.

b.) Do you have a plan?

Fifty-three percent responded to this question. Only fifteen percent reported possessing a plan to facilitate their transition out of public housing. The other eighty-five percent expressed the desire to move out, however, have no idea of how to make that happen. Time lines were expressed for moving, but when inquired as to how they were going to accomplish it several responses were “I don’t know.”

3. a) How many days per week do you watch TV?

Ninety-two percent of the participants responded. Seventy-one percent reported watching TV daily; fourteen percent reported watching TV three to five days; nine percent watch it three days or less; and six percent do not watch TV at all.

c.) Do you ever watch Christian channels/programming/shows?

Seventy-four percent responded to this question. Of the responses sixty-four percent reported watching Christian channels, programming or shows, and thirty-six percent reported as not watching any Christian channels, programming or shows.

4. a.) Did you receive the weekly DVDs (Living For The Promise)?

One hundred percent of the participants responded to this question. Ninety-five percent reported receiving the DVDs; five percent cited not receiving them.

b.) How many of the DVDs did you watch?

Ninety-seven percent responded to this question. Forty-three percent reported never watching the programing recorded on the DVDs while fifty-seven percent watched at least one but not all six.

c.) Did they help you in any way?

Forty-two percent responded to this question. Sixty-eight percent responded that they were “inspired to look at things differently”, and “motivated to keep going.” Thirteen percent reported that it made the Word of God “clearer” or “easier to understand”; while nineteen percent stated that it did not help them at all.

5. How long have you been employed or unemployed?

Eighty-two percent responded to this question. Forty-five percent have been unemployed for five years or less; Nineteen percent have been employed for more than five years; thirteen percent were equally unemployed for more than five years or employed for less than one year; and ten percent were employed between two and four years.

6. Do you feel that you qualify for better employment? Why or why not?

Seventy-four percent of the participants responded to this question. Forty-three percent believed that they do not qualify for better employment, and fifty-seven percent agreed that they are qualified for better employment opportunities. Thirty-eight percent of the participants who responded indicated having been trained and certified in designated employment fields. Fourteen percent cited being comfortable where they were and health issues for not qualifying for better employment.

7. Do you feel encouraged or inspired in spite of your hardships?

Eighty-five percent of the participants responded. Eighty-eight percent cited being encouraged while twelve percent reported not being encouraged or inspired. Some were managing sickness, abandonment by family and friends, and recovering from domestic violence attacks. Seventy-five percent were noted as believing that their situations are getting better while twenty-five percent felt stuck in the same place with no change occurring.

8. How frequently do you attend church? If you do not attend, why not?

Eighty-seven percent of the participants responded to this question. Thirty percent reported attending weekly; Forty percent cited attending monthly; and thirty percent declared never attending. Thirty-seven and one-half percent cited transportation challenges as the reason for non-attendance, equally, thirty-seven and one-half percent were unsure as to why they do not attend. Twenty-five percent explained health related issues for their lack of church attendance.

9. How do you feel about Christians/church people?

Eighty-seven percent of the participants responded to this question. Seventy-six percent declared that Christians/church people are “Ok” or “Good.” Fifteen percent classified them as “Regular people”; however, nine percent deemed them as “Hypocritical”, “Judgmental” or “Offensive.”

10. Do you think that praying helps your situation?

Ninety percent of the participants responded to this question. One hundred percent of those who responded believed that prayer helped situations and there were no record of anyone denying that prayer was beneficial. Fifty-seven percent reported praying on a daily basis, twenty-five percent stated praying multiple times during a day, fourteen percent prayed on a weekly basis and four percent prayed sporadically. Forty percent were recorded possessing “faith that God is real” and knowing that “God hears our prayers when we pray” as reasons for praying regardless of their circumstances.

An analysis of this data revealed that the hypothesis of this researcher remains true, and that those living in low-income housing experience positive changes, both attitudinal and behaviorally, when presented with the messages hope. This is supported by the decreased number of residents who identified with being depressed in spite of their circumstances. Seventy-five percent were cited as believing that things would get better even though some had been violently attacked, abandoned and battling are illnesses. The total, averaged length of time the participants lived in some form of public housing [under thirteen years] decreased, but the averaged time that the participants have lived in this project’s public housing context [just over eight years] remained consistent.

The patterns established through this qualitative tool conveyed the consistent theme that the loss of hope intensified because of family and financial hardships. Thirty-one percent moved to, and remain in low-income housing due to family support requirements while thirty-eight percent were there due to affordability. The change in variables [access to the message of hope] in the low-income community created a change in the target population. Ninety-five percent of the participants reported that they received the message of hope via media, and seventy percent of the participants reported attending church services at least monthly. Also, the data indicated that sixty-nine percent of the target population viewed the Christian church as "Ok", "Good" or "I love it." Their confidence appeared to be restored in the Christian church. This finding suggests that the changes were a direct result of the message of hope being accessible and available.

In conclusion, these findings indicate that the poor desired encouragement and hope from God. The blockade was their [the poor's] perception of the Christian church, and not possessing a viable means to obtain the message of hope. The disenfranchised remain opened to God, opened to prayer, opened to church as a place of gathering and opened to doing better in life. There was a bridge built by the researcher that fulfilled the scriptures of Matthew 28:18-20, and restored hope to the poor and downtrodden. It is the stance of this researcher that the messages of hope delivered via media were effective [produced positive attitudinal changes], and transformative [produced positive behavioral changes].

The Outcome

The position of this researcher has remains that the impact of the Gospel Message of Jesus Christ, or the message of hope, is effective and transformative. Its' effectiveness produces positive changes in the attitudes of its' recipients. Its' transformativeness produces positive changes in the behaviors of those who apply it to their lives. This section will compare and contrast the pretest and posttest data to prove that this theory is true.

Comparative Summary of the Quantitative Tools — Life Focus Survey

The quantitative tools introduced areas of strong concern that ranged from severe depression to self-deception and denial. The following data depicts the changes in the target population as a direct result of the message of hope. Questions that are unique to the pretest or the posttest will be labeled as such and discussed individually. The positive symbol (+) and negative symbol (-) are only indications of numerical value changes.

State of Mind / Self–Perception						
Pretest				**Posttest**		
	Yes	**No**		**Yes**	**No**	**Results:**
Question 1	67%	33%		72%	28%	+ 5%
Question 2	80%	20%		70%	30%	-10%
Question 6	59%	41%		41%	59%	-18%
Question 7	28%	72%		61%	39%	+33%
Question 8	42%	58%		62%	38%	+20%
Question 13	96%	4%		97%	3%	+1%
Question 14	46%	54%		74%	26%	+28%

Attitudinal Comparative Assessment
Figure 9.

The pretest revealed a lot of discontentment within the target population, and in the manner by which they perceived their circumstances. The implementation of the treatment hypothesis [providing the message of hope via media] yielded notable changes:

- Q1: There was a five percent increase in the participants who became happy with their living arrangements. This suggests the acceptance of their reality, and the responsibility to improve it.

- Q2: There was a reduction by ten percent of the participants who were optimistic of moving out of low-income housing. This could suggest complacency, frustration or the fulfillment of intentional regrouping.

- Q6: There was an eighteen percent reduction in participants looking for a better job. This could confirm the suggestion of complacency, frustration or submission to defeat.

- Q7: There was an increase of thirty-three percent of the participants that believed the HRHA management helped to improve their lives. The change could validate the suggested acceptance of responsibility for personal advancement.

- Q8: There was an increase of twenty percent of the participants that believed they received sufficient assistance. This change established a recognizable pattern of positive attitude changes. There is acceptance and appreciation for what is available opposed to the negative perspective related to what is not accessible.

- Q13: The one percent improvement suggests consistency with this variable. Subjectively, the participants possessing the desire for a better life, both pretest and posttest, is a positive regardless.

- Q14: There was a twenty-eight percent increase in the participants' perceived ability to be happy if nothing in their current situation changes. This change confirms a change in attitude, outlook and thought process.

In conclusion, seventy-one percent of the quantitative tool focused on the attitude assessment experienced a positive change. These changes were not revealed as a result of the pretest; however, it was noticeable as a result of the posttest. The identified variable in this study is the implementation of the message of hope via media.

Spirituality / Church Perception						
Pretest				**Posttest**		
	Yes	**No**		**Yes**	**No**	**Results:**
Question 9	100%	—		100%	—	No Change
Question 10	50%	50%		61%	39%	+11%
Question 11	52%	48%		89%	11%	+37%
Question 12	37.5%	62.5%		54%	46%	+16.5%
Question 15	87.5%	12.5%		100%	—	+12.5%

Spirituality Comparative Assessment
Figure 10.

The pretest data clearly communicated disconnect between the community and the modern Christian church. There remained a desire for closer relationship with God and trust in God. The “hypocritical”, “judgmental”, and “offensive” persona interpreted by the poor of those who represented God became a hindrance to them [the marginalized]. It prohibited the disenfranchised from receiving assistance from the Church, and the message of hope from God. The implementation of the treatment hypothesis [providing the message of hope via media] yielded notable changes:

- Q9: There was consistency in that the target population believed in God in spite of their perception of the Christian church. All participants in the pretest and posttest confirmed belief in God.

- Q10: The increase of eleven percent of the participants attending church suggests a change in the perception of the Church.

- Q11: The increase of thirty-seven percent of the participants reporting a willingness to go to the Church for help further validate the suggested change in the perception of the Christian church.

- Q12: The increase by sixteen and one-half percent of the participants acknowledging that they have received help from the Church in the past could suggestion forgiveness of the Church’s perceived abandonment and betrayal. It could also establish a recognizable pattern of changed perception of the Church.

- Q15: The increase of twelve and one-half percent of the participants who pray and read the Bible confirmed a change in the perception [attitude] of the target population.

In conclusion, one hundred percent of the quantitative tool converged on the spirituality assessment, and noted a positive change. Only one of the assessed variables was consistent between the pretest and posttest. The most noticeable changes were as a result of the posttest. The identified variable in this study is the implementation of the message of hope via media.

Questions three and four were designed to assess the resources available to the participants. The pretest Q3 identified that ninety-six percent of the participants owned a television, and Q4 identified that eighty percent owned a DVD playing device. The posttest Q3 revealed that ninety-seven percent of the participants received the free DVDs, and Q4 revealed that forty-five percent watched the media. This data confirmed the delivery, receipt, utilization and application of the message of hope that was captured on the media.

It is hereby proven that the impact of media ministry on low-income communities is effective for instituting positive attitude changes, acceptance of personal responsibilities, perception modifications and self-appreciation.

Comparative Summary of the Qualitative Tools — Life Focus Interview Questionnaire

The qualitative tools expounded on areas of strong concern that ranged from gross denial, misdirected anger and unemployment just to name a few. The following data depicts the changes in the target population as a direct result of the message of hope. Questions that are unique to the pretest or the posttest will be labeled as such and discussed individually.

Q1: What is the main reason that you are living in public housing?

Pretest	Posttest
Affordability — 54%	Affordability — 38%
Family Support — 21%	Convenience — 31%
Public Housing Transfer — 12.5%	Family Support — 15%
Health Issues — 8%	Health Issues / Unsure — 8%

Comparative Qualitative Analysis Chart #1
Figure 11.

The qualitative data identified three common threads that remained consistent with the pretest and posttest. The thread of affordability varied by a sixteen percent decline, family support varied by a six percent decline while health issues remained at eight percent coupled with those individuals who were unsure. This consistency in data validates these variables as real concerns that must be addressed via a different means. The message of hope had no effect on this variable.

Q2: Do you want to move out of public housing? When and/or do you have a plan?

Pretest		**Posttest**	
Yes — 85%	No — 15%	Yes —79%	No — 21%
Possess A Plan		**Possess A Plan**	
Yes — 20%	No — 80%	Yes —15%	No —85%
Reason For Non-Relocation		**Reason For Non-Relocation**	
1. Lack of Money 50%	2. Lack of a Job 50%	1. Comfortable 67%	2. Affordability 33%

Comparative Qualitative Analysis Chart #2
Figure 12.

The pretest and posttest data showed a consistent pattern of behavior in showing the same data with slight variations. The percentage of individuals who desired to relocate out of public housing declined by six percent, and the percentage of individuals reported possessed a plan declined by five percent. This suggests that there was attitudinal change within the target population's perception. The qualitative data confirmed the attitudinal change upon revealing the top reasons for not possessing the desire to relocate. The pretest data exposed the lack of money and the lack of employment as equal and specific reasons not to relocate. The participants viewed the desire to relocate as a negative because of their perceived inability to accomplish it. However, the posttest displayed that comfort in the maintenance of their present residence and the *ability* to afford their present residence as the lead cause of not having a desire to relocate.

The participants' focus was on the positive acknowledgement in what they were completing successfully at that time. They viewed the desire to relocate as a possible positive because of their perceived ability to accomplish it as a result of what they were already accomplishing. This suggests that the message of hope was effective, and produced a positive attitude change.

Q3: How many days per week do you watch TV? Do you ever watch Christian channels/programming/shows?

Pretest		**Posttest**	
Daily — 63%		Daily — 71%	
3 – 5 Days per Week — 11%		3 – 5 Days per Week — 14%	
< 3 Days per Week — 22%		< 3 Days per Week — 9 %	
Never — 4%		Never — 6%	
Christian Channels/Programs/Shows		**Christian Channels/Programs/Shows**	
Yes — 0%	No — 100%	Yes — 64%	No — 36%

Comparative Qualitative Analysis Chart #3
Figure 13.

The pretest and posttest data displayed another consistent pattern of behavior. The amount of time that the TV was watched changed by less than ten percent in each threaded category. The exception was the thirteen percent decrease in those who watched TV less than three days per week. Clearly this identified category spread across the remaining threads with the greatest increase recognized in those who watch TV daily.

The major change in the pretest and posttest data segments were found in the percentage of participants who watched Christian channels/programs/shows. There was an increased change from none of the participants watching to sixty-four percent who reported having watched it [Christian channels/programs/shows]. This positive behavior change noted in the posttest data suggests that the message of hope is transformative.

Q4: How frequently do you watch DVDs? *Pretest
Did you receive the weekly DVDs (Living For The Promise)? *Posttest
Would you watch a Christian program/worship service if available? *Pretest
How many of the DVDs did you watch? *Posttest
Did they help you in any way? *Posttest

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Pretest</th><th colspan="3">Posttest</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">Frequency of DVD Viewing</th><th colspan="3">Received the DVDs</th></tr>
<tr><td>Frequently (>3 time/week)

22%</td><td>Never (<0 time/week)

33%</td><td>Sporadically (< 1 /month)

45%</td><td colspan="2">Yes

95%</td><td>No

5%</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">Would Watch a Christian Program</th><th colspan="3">Number of DVDs Watched</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Yes

71%</td><td>No

29%</td><td>None

43%</td><td>1 – 5

57%</td><td>All

—</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3" rowspan="2"></td><th colspan="3">Did The Help in Any Way?</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Inspired/Motivated — 68%

Did Not Help — 19%

Clearer Understanding of God’s Word

— 13%</td></tr>
</table>

Comparative Qualitative Analysis Chart #4
Figure 14.

The pretest and posttest data was unique and non-comparative. The pretest data conveyed a moderate-high risk of seventy-eight percent of the participants reporting to never, or only sporadically watch DVDs. Additionally, twenty-nine percent cited that they would not watch a Christian program. The treatment hypothesis distributed the pre-recorded message of hope media to non-participants and participants alike. The posttest revealed that almost every participant received the material, and the majority viewed it multiple times. The posttest data identified changes in attitude and behavior: the sixty-eight percent reported being "inspired/motivated" suggests a change in attitude, and fifty-seven percent reported having viewed one to five discs suggests a change in behavior. The positive change in attitude and behavior suggests that the message of hope is effective and transformative.

Q5: How long have you been employed or unemployed?

Pretest		**Posttest**	
Employed		**Employed**	
< 5 years — 34%	> 5 Years — 9%	< 5 years — 23%	> 5 years — 19%
Unemployed		**Unemployed**	
< 5 years — 13%	No Answer — 44%	< 5 years — 45%	> 5 Years — 13%

Comparative Qualitative Analysis Chart #5
Figure 15.

The pretest and posttest data was inconclusive. There were noticeable changes in the data that included an eleven percent decline in those employed for less than five years, and a ten percent increase in those employed for greater than five years. More significantly the thirty-two percent increase in the unemployed participants who have been unemployed

for less than five years was alarming. The pretest data revealed that forty-four percent of the participants declined to answer the question of unemployment status. However, the posttest data reported forty-five percent that referenced unemployment for less than five years. This comparable, relative percentage change could suggest that the participants who declined the pretest question answered the posttest question. If true, then this would account for the declined participation in the pretest, indicate a positive attitude change, and suggest that the message of hope was effective.

Q6: Do you feel that you qualify for better employment? Why or why not?

Pretest			**Posttest**	
Yes 41%	No 26%	No Answer 33%	Yes 57%	No 43%
Qualified			**Qualified**	
Professional Certifications — 18% Prior Work Experiences — 82%			Professional Certifications — 28% Prior Work Experiences — 72%	
Unqualified			**Unqualified**	
Health Concerns — 29% Childcare Challenges —14% Lack of Job Training — 14% Criminal Background — 19% No Answer / Unsure — 24%			Health Concerns — 32% Childcare Challenges — 27% Lack of Job Training — 28% Criminal Background — 12% Unsure — 1%	

Comparative Qualitative Analysis Chart #6
Figure 16.

The pretest and posttest data displayed another consistent pattern of perception. The increased response by sixteen percent of participants indicated an attitude change. Also, the change from the pretest participants who declined to answer to all of the posttest participants answering validated the attitudinal change. The noted presence of positive outlook, and reduced percentage of the unqualified that were "unsure" suggests that the message of hope is effective.

Q7: Do you feel encouraged or inspired in spite of your hardships? Do you ever feel like things are getting better? *(Question 9 on the Pretest)

Pretest			**Posttest**	
Encouraged / Inspired			Encouraged / Inspired	
Yes	No	No Answer	Yes	No
41%	37%	22%	88%	12%

Comparative Qualitative Analysis Chart #7
Figure 17.

The pretest and posttest data revealed significant changes. The participants that declined to answer in the pretest answered the same question in the posttest. This was a positive behavior change. Additionally, those who reported being encouraged increased forty-three percent in the posttest while those uninspired decreased twenty-five percent. These were positive attitude changes. This data suggests that as a result of the positive attitude and behavioral changes that the message of hope was effective and transformative.

Q8: How frequently do you attend church? *(Question 10 on the Pretest)

Pretest	Posttest
Weekly — 15%	Weekly — 30%
Monthly — 18%	Monthly — 40%
Never — 56%	Never — 30%
No Answer — 11%	

Comparative Qualitative Analysis Chart #8
Figure 18.

The pretest and posttest data reported noticeable changes in attitude and behavior. Weekly attendance increased by fifteen percent, monthly attendance increased by twenty-two percent, and those who never attended decreased by twenty-six percent. These were significant changes in behavior. The absence of participants who declined to answer in the pretest being present in the posttest data indicated a positive change in the attitudes of the target population. This data suggests that the as a result of the positive attitude and behavior changes that the message of hope is effective and transformative.

Q9: How do you feel about Christians/church people? *(Question 11 on the Pretest)

Pretest	Posttest
“Good” / “OK” — 19%	“Good” / “OK” — 76%
“Hypocritical” — 18%	“Hypocritical” — 9%
“No Opinion” — 22%	“Regular People” — 15%
No Answer — 41%	

Comparative Qualitative Analysis Chart #9
Figure 19.

The pretest and posttest data revealed three significant trends in perception changes. The first was the increased percentage by fifty-seven percent of those who viewed Christians/church people as “Good” or “OK” was very noticeable. The second was a decrease by fifty percent in the negative perception of Christians/church people being “Hypocritical”. The third, a reoccurred trend, was the absence of the participants who declined to answer in the pretest that answered the posttest. This data indicated a positive change in the attitude of the participants, and validates that the message of hope is effective.

Q10: Do you think that praying helps your situation? How frequently do you pray?
*(Question 14 of the Pretest)

Pretest			**Posttest**	
Yes	No	No Answer	Yes	No
70%	0%	30%	100%	0%
Frequency of Prayer			**Frequency of Prayer**	
Daily — 60% Multiple Time per Day — 40%			Daily — 57% Multiple Time per Day — 25% Weekly — 14% Sporadically — 4%	

Comparative Qualitative Analysis Chart #10
Figure 20.

The pretest and posttest data further solidified the pattern of positive changes in attitude and behavior. The increase of thirty percent for those who believed that prayer helped their situation, the absence those who did not believe that prayer helped and the absence of those who did not answer the pretest, but answered the posttest were all positive attitude changes. Additionally, the breakout in the frequency of prayer to multiple times throughout the day, week and month were indictors of a positive change in behaviors. This data indicated positive attitudinal and behavior changes in the participants, and suggests that the message of hope is effective and transformative.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of the project was to prove that the effective and transformative impacts of media ministry exist as it relates to the low-income community. It employed simple evangelistic and missional tactics to reinforce, or provide hope to those living in low-income housing complexes through the usage of media ministry tools. The treatment hypothesis created DVDs of inspirational Christian messages [messages of hope] presented by the researcher, and distributed to each household pre-identified on the HRHA properties of Davisville and Bland Court. It was the intent of this project to urge each household to watch the free, weekly DVDs for the purpose of encouragement by the Christian message of hope. It is the position of this research that these messages of hope would prove effective and transformative for the target population.

The approach successfully engaged context volunteers from the researcher's ministry context that served as the support team. They managed administrative, community contact, production and training tasks to ensure this project's success. The pre-recorded messages include: Building an Effective Prayer Life, Overcoming Obstacles of Faith, Recognizing Your Potential, Unlocking Your Potential and Living a Better Life. The results of the pretests and posttests reflected, generally, noticeable and significant changes in the attitudes and behaviors of the participants. This researcher concludes that based upon the data that has been collected, analyzed and reported that media ministry has an effective and transformative impact on low-income communities that are positive.

CHAPTER SIX

RELECTIONS, SUMMARY, AND CONCLUSION

The Reflections

This project served as the conduit for the advancement of a lifelong dream and goal of being engaged in media broadcasting. The pursuit of the Doctor of Ministry degree at United Theological Seminary, as a Kenneth Copeland Scholar, opened the corridors of my heart, mind and spirit to do things unimaginable. It has been a fulfilling journey from the start to establish a noticeable mark in the world and on history. This project resonated with the researcher's childhood struggles, and grew out of those unresolved hurts and pains. Poverty is a spirit that must be addressed and handled by spiritual people. Money serves as a temporary solution to a problem that has its' root entrenched deep into the lives of the poor. It can be the answer to many prayers; however, if the foundational issue is never addressed then the same prayers will return once the money is wasted. This project afforded the researcher opportunity to return to deep-seeded agonies, and administer healing to them. The agonies of abandonment, brokenness, deceit, financial difficulties, misunderstanding, unforgiveness, resentment and struggle were just a few areas mended for the researcher.

Investing the time to gain knowledge about broadcasting equipment, editing hardware and software, lighting supplies and techniques, props and sound management has been priceless. Life has the ability to rob us of many things, but it can never take away what we know as fact. Each moment of research and compilation was fueled by this researcher's ambition to defeat the spiritual enemy of poverty.

The Summary

This research project explored the premise that poverty is a spiritual ailment that can be combated and defeated by consistent exposure to the message of hope, The Gospel of Jesus Christ, recorded in the scriptures of the Holy Bible. It [this project] was a direct result of personal experiences in conjunction with the context that led the researcher to identify and take action to mitigate this problematic condition. It was missional in nature, and not evangelistic. The intent was to connect with the poor within their context, and assist with acknowledging, combating and overcoming their circumstances and situations. The unique implementation of media tools as a means to address the stigma being carried by the modern Christian church provided the residents of Davisville and Bland Court, public housing complexes within the city of Hopewell, Virginia, consistent access to the message of hope without the influence of the Church.

The researcher, who is the Senior Pastor of the Abundant Life Christian Center International, located in Hopewell, Virginia, directed this project. Those who assisted in this study, the project support team, were contextual associates from the congregation of ALCCI specifically trained to engage the target population from an academic perspective.

Their greatest challenge was not interacting with the people, but it was restraining the uncontrollable desire to help to them. It was this involvement that served as confirmation that the researcher's hypothesis had begun to gain traction.

This project gave the target population the message of hope on prerecorded DVDs over the course of several weeks. Different members of the project support team delivered the DVDs to all residents of Davisville and Bland Court complexes on the same day of each week, and approximately at the same time of the day. This prevented personal relationships from being created and possibly contaminating the research. This project was not designed to transition people back into the church. It was designed to determine if the Gospel of Jesus Christ was impactful enough to produce effective and transformative results. There were six primary assumptions explored over the course of this study. Those assumptions are that low-income families:

1. Possessed access to and utilized basic television channels and services;
2. Possessed access to and utilized local television channels and services;
3. Possessed access to and utilized local radio stations;
4. Possessed access to and utilized Compact Discs (CDs) and Digital Video Discs (DVDs) players;
5. Were more receptive to initial, spiritual enrichment presented within their comfort/private areas (Home, vehicles, etc.) prior to it being presented in an open/public area (Church worship services, special events, etc.); and,
6. Were willing to consciously make life-enhancing changes as a direct result of consistent, spiritual encouragement.

The theological approach to this project was liberation theology with the intent to empower the marginalized to accomplish greater. The researcher employed the transformative mixed methods approach methodology to gather, analyze and report the data. The data was validated by triangulation between the literature reviews, quantitative and qualitative tools that were administered in a pretest and posttest format. The mixed methods pretest was administered first, followed by the treatment hypothesis, the mixed methods posttest, the data analysis and finally the report on the findings.

The findings of this study clearly supported that there exists effective and transformative impacts of media ministry specifically on low-income communities. The message of hope can be shared via media to areas by which would normally be inaccessible. The consistency of being exposed to the message of hope produced an attitudinal and behavioral change in positive ways. A suggested follow-on to this project would be to build upon the outcomes by customizing this model to address the trends discovered as a product of this research.

The Conclusion

Creating, designing, implementing and reviewing this project has been a great accomplishment for the community of Hopewell, Virginia, and the body of Christ. It spawns moments of disbelief to conclude that such an impactful initiative could originate from my experiences of hurt and pain. The countless hours of having to focus during complete pandemonium have produced a worthy result. For it is true that when God gives a vision to you that only you can complete it. When all else failed I still have God.

APPENDIX A

TABLE OF TERMINOLOGY

Table of Terminology

A		
	Adventism	a Christian movement which began in the 19th century, in the context of the Second Great Awakening revival in the United States. The name refers to belief in the imminent Second Coming (or "Second Advent") of Jesus Christ.
B		
	Bastion	a place or system in which something continues to survive.
	better days	days or moments that are more positive than others.
	big piece of chicken	the honor or reward for being the hard working leader or provider.
	Board of Elders	the primary governance group of a church.
	Bureaucracy	a body of nonelective government officials and/or an administrative policy-making group.
C		
	Capitalism	an economic system characterized by private or corporate ownership of capital goods, by investments that are determined by private decision, and by prices, production, and the distribution of goods that are determined mainly by competition in a free market.
	Contemporary Church	an organized place of worship that conforms to modern or current ideas in style, fashion, design, etc.
	Contextual Analysis	a method to analyze the context or environment of a text to assess that text within the circumstances of its' historical and cultural setting.
	common good	the benefit or interests of all.

D

deficit	the amount that is less than the amount that is needed; inadequacy or insufficiency.
Democrats	a person who believes in the political or social equality of all people; a member of the Democratic Party.
Denomination	a recognized autonomous branch of the Christian Church; a religious group.
Depravity	moral corruption; wickedness; an evil or immoral act; a corrupt act or practice.
desires	a strong feeling of wanting to have something or wishing for something to happen.
Despair	the complete loss or absence of hope; someone or something that causes hopelessness.
Disabilities	a physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities; lack of adequate power or strength; incapacity.
Discipleship	the process of embracing and assisting in spreading the teachings of another.
Disparaged	to speak of in a slighting or disrespectful way; belittle; to be regarded as unimportant, weak, bad, etc.
Doctrine	a set of ideas or beliefs that are taught or believed to be true.
Downtrodden	to be without hope because of being treated badly by powerful people, governments, organizations, etc.
draw	to pull or drag someone or something, so as to make it follow behind.

Dysfunctional	to not function or operate normally or properly; possessing conflict, misbehavior, neglect and/or abuse.

E

ecclesia	an assembly, or congregation; church.
Effective	being successful in producing a desired or intended result.
Emotionalism	possessing an excessively emotional character; a strong or excessive appeal to the emotions.
enabled	to make able; given power, means, competence, or ability; authorized.
Ephemeral	something or someone that is lasting for a very short time; short-lived; transitory.
euangélion	the good news of the coming of the Messiah; the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
Evangelicalism	a world-wide Protestant movement that stresses the authority of the Bible, the importance of believing that Jesus Christ saved you personally from sin or hell, and the preaching of these beliefs to other people.
Evangelism	the spreading of the Christian gospel by public preaching or personal witness.
Evangelistic	seeking to covert others to the Christian faith for the purpose of church growth.

F

Faith	strong belief in God or in the doctrines of a religion; based on spiritual apprehension rather than proof.
fides quae creditor	the faith-content one believes objectively and rationally.
fides qua creditor	the faith through which one believes, experientially.

Fiscal	of or relating to money and especially to the money a government, business or organization earns, spends or owes.
Fundamentalism	a movement in 20th century Protestantism emphasizing the literally interpreted Bible as fundamental to Christian life and teaching.

G

Grassroots	the most basic level of an activity or organization.

H

Homogeneity	composition from like parts, elements, or characteristics; composed of parts or elements that are all of the same kind; of the same or similar nature or kind.
Hope	being or possessing the ability to be optimistic; having the desire for a certain thing to happen; a feeling of trust.

L

Larcenists	a person who commits to the unlawful taking and removing of another's personal property with the intent of permanently depriving the owner; theft.
lectio divina	divine reading; a traditional Benedictine practice of scriptural reading, meditation and prayer intended to promote communion with God and to increase the knowledge of God's Word.
Liberalism	belief in the value of social and political change in order to achieve progress; favorable to progress or reform, as in political or religious affairs.
Liberation	the act of setting someone free from imprisonment, slavery, or oppression; release.

	Liberation Theology	the contextual theology focused on issues of oppression and discrimination in its particular context that insists on the need to promote and practice justice and love, not only at the personal level, but also in societal practices and structures.
	Low-income	refers to an insufficient income able to meet one's basic needs; relating to individuals or households supported by an income that is below average.
M		
	Marginalized	a person or group treated as insignificant or peripheral; powerless or unimportant within a society or group.
	Message of Hope	the Gospel of Jesus Christ
	Methodism	a movement that originated as a revival within the 18th-century Church of England and became a separate Church following John Wesley's death. It stresses both personal and social morality and has an Arminian doctrine and, in the U.S., a modified episcopal polity.
	Missional	seeking to spread the Christian faith while providing educational and other assistance as needed or requested.
N		
	Nostalgic	the pleasure and sadness that is caused by remembering something from the past and wishing that you could experience it again; the state of being homesick.
O		
	Oppressed	to treat a person or group in a cruel or unfair way; to make someone feel sad or worried for a long period of time.
	Oppression	the unjust or cruel exercise of authority or power; a sense of being weighed down in body or mind.

P

Pentecostalism	a movement that emphasizes the charismatic aspects of Christianity influenced by the Holy Ghost, and adopts a fundamental attitude to the Bible.
Pilferagers	one who steals part of the contents of something while leaving the outer packaging or shell.
Polarization	a sharp division, as of a population or group, into opposing factions; to cause people or opinions to separate into opposing groups.
Polity	a form, process or system of government.
Poor	a person or people lacking sufficient money to live at a standard considered comfortable or normal in a society.
Postmodern Thought	a late 20th-century concept or movement characterized by broad skepticism, subjectivism, or relativism; a general suspicion of reason; and an acute sensitivity to the role of ideology in asserting and maintaining political and economic power.
Poststructuralism	Any of various theories or methods of analysis, including deconstruction and some psychoanalytic theories, that deny the validity of structuralism's method of binary opposition and maintain that meanings and intellectual categories are shifting and unstable.
Poverty	the state of being extremely poor; the state or condition of having little or no money, goods, or means of support; lacking something.
Practical Theology	the practical application of theology to everyday life.
Programmatically	having, advocating, resembling, or following a plan, policy, or program.

	Propaganda	information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote or publicize a particular political cause, or point of view.
	Pseudo-integrated	false, spurious, pretended integration; not actually having integration.
R		
	Reformism	the belief that gradual changes through and within existing institutions can ultimately change a society's fundamental economic system and political structures.
	renewing process	the process of growth and transformation into the image of God.
	Republicans	an advocate for the powers of sovereignty are vested in the people and are exercised by the people, either directly, or through representatives chosen by the people, to whom those powers are specially delegated; a member of the Republican Party.
S		
	status quo	the current situation: the way things are now.
	Subsidized	to help someone or something pay for the costs of (something).
	suum cuique	a Latin phrase meaning "to each his own" or "to each what he deserves."
T		
	Tea Partiers	supporters of the grassroots movement that calls awareness to any issue which challenges the security, sovereignty, or domestic tranquility of the United States of America.
	Tertiary	third in order or level.
	Territorialism	a principle or system that gives predominance to the landed classes; a social

		system that gives authority and influence in a state to the landowners.
	Traditionalism	the upholding or maintenance of tradition, especially so as to resist change.
	Transformative	to change in form, appearance, or structure; metamorphose; to change in condition, nature, or character; convert.
V		
	Virtual Churches	organized worship experiences that are very close to being the actual worship without physically being present in the worship location.

APPENDIX B

PRETEST

Life Focus Survey (Pretest)

Directions: Please circle the best answer. Your participation in this assessment is **strictly** voluntary. The information collected during this interview will be used for academic research only, and your name, address and contact numbers will remain confidential.

1. Are you happy living in your apartment?	Yes	No
2. Will you ever move out of your apartment?	Yes	No
3. Do you have a TV?	Yes	No
4. Do you have a DVD player/Laptop	Yes	No
5. Do you currently work?	Yes	No
6. Are you looking for a better job?	Yes	No
7. Is HRHA Management helping you?	Yes	No
8. Are you getting enough assistance?	Yes	No
9. Do you believe in GOD?	Yes	No
10. Do you attend a church?	Yes	No
11. Would you go to a church for help?	Yes	No
12. Has a church helped you in the past?	Yes	No
13. Do you want a better life for you and your family?	Yes	No
14. Will you be happy with life if nothing changes?	Yes	No
15. Do you pray or read the Bible?	Yes	No

Please Complete

Name: _____ Sex: Female Male

Unit #: _____

Contact Phone #: (____) ____ - _____ Date: _____

Community: Davisville / Kippax / Langston Park / Piper Square / Thomas Rolfe Court

Life Focus Interview (Pretest)

Interview Disclaimer: Your participation in this assessment is **strictly** voluntary. The information collected during this interview will be used for academic research only, and your name, address and contact numbers will remain confidential.

1. a.) How long have you lived in public housing?
   b.) How long have you lived in this apartment/complex?
   c.) What is the main reason that you are living in public housing?

2. a.) Do you want to move out of public housing?
   b.) *(If Yes, then…)* When and/or do you have a plan?
   c.) *(If No, then…)* Why not?

3. a.) How many days per week do you watch TV?
   b.) What channels or programming/shows do you watch?
   c.) Do you ever watch Christian channels/programming/shows?
   d.) *(If so…)* Name a few:

4. a.) How frequently do you watch DVDs?
   b.) What type (genres) of DVDs do you watch most?
   c.) Would you watch a Christian program or worship service if available?

5. a.) How long have you been employed?
   b.) *(Or…)* How long have you been unemployed?

6. a.) Do you feel that you qualify for better employment?
   b.) Why or why not?

7. a.) Do you feel that HRHA is helping make your life easier or harder?
   b.) Explain.

8. a.) Does the City, State and/or Federal governments provide enough assistance to help you get back on your feet?
   b.) *(If so, How?)*
   c.) *(If not, what do you need?)*

9. a.) Do you sometimes feel depressed because of your hardships?
   b.) *(If so, when/how frequently?)*
   c.) Do you ever feel like things won't get any better?
   d.) *(If so, when/how frequently?)*

10. a.) How frequently do you attend church?
    b.) What church do you attend when you go?
    c.) *(If they do not attend…)* Why won't you attend a church?

11. a.) How do you feel about Christians/church people?
    b.) How many times has a church encouraged and/or helped you?

12. a.) Do you think that hearing a sermon frequently will help you?
    b.) *(Why or Why not?)*
    c.) Do you think that going to church regularly will help you?
    d.) *(Why or Why not?)*

13. a.) What do you need to make your life better?
    b.) *(Why or why not?)*

14. a.) Do you think that praying helps your situation?
    b.) *(Why or why not?)*
    c.) How frequently do you pray?

15. a.) If you receive a free DVD with a sermon or worship service recorded on it, would you watch it?
    b.) *(Why or why not?)*
    c.) After watching it would you consider attending that service in person?
    d.) *(Why or why not?)*

Please Complete

Name: _____ Sex: Female Male

Unit #: _____

Contact Phone #: (____) ____-_____

Community: Davisville / Kippax / Langston Park / Piper Square / Thomas Rolfe Court

Date: _____

APPENDIX C

POSTTEST

Life Focus Survey (Posttest)

Directions: Please circle the best answer. Your participation in this assessment is **strictly** voluntary. The information collected during this interview will be used for academic research only, and your name, address and contact numbers will remain confidential.

1. Are you happy living in your apartment?	Yes	No
2. Will you ever move out of your apartment?	Yes	No
3. Have your been receiving the free DVD?	Yes	No
4. Did you watch any of the DVDs?	Yes	No
5. Do you currently work?	Yes	No
6. Are you looking for a better job?	Yes	No
7. Is HRHA Management helping you?	Yes	No
8. Are you getting enough assistance?	Yes	No
9. Do you believe in GOD?	Yes	No
10. Do you attend a church?	Yes	No
11. Would you go to a church for help?	Yes	No
12. Has a church helped you in the past?	Yes	No
13. Do you want a better life for you and your family?	Yes	No
14. Will you be happy with life if nothing changes?	Yes	No
15. Do you pray or read the Bible?	Yes	No

Please Complete

Name: _____ Sex: Female Male

Unit #: _____

Contact Phone #: (____) ____ - _____ Date: _____

Community: Davisville / Kippax / Langston Park / Piper Square / Thomas Rolfe Court

Life Focus Interview (Posttest)

Interview Disclaimer: Your participation in this assessment is **strictly** voluntary. The information collected during this interview will be used for academic research only, and your name, address and contact numbers will remain confidential.

1. a.) How long have you lived in public housing?
   b.) How long have you lived in this apartment/complex?
   c.) What is the main reason that you are living in public housing?

2. a.) Do you want to move out of public housing?
   b.) *(If Yes, then…)* When and/or do you have a plan? *(If No, then…)* Why not?

3. a.) How many days per week do you watch TV?
   b.) Do you ever watch Christian channels/programming/shows?

4. a.) Did you receive the weekly DVD's (Living For The Promise)?
   b.) How many of the DVD's did you watch?
   c.) Did they help you in any way? *(If so…)* How did they help you?

5. a.) How long have you been employed or unemployed?

6. a.) Do you feel that you qualify for better employment? (*Why or why not?*)

7. a.) Do you feel encouraged or inspired in spite of your hardships?
   b.) *(If so, when/how frequently?)*
   c.) Do you ever feel like things are getting better? *(If so, why/why not?)*

8. a.) How frequently do you attend church?
   b.) What church do you attend when you go?
   c.) *(If they do not attend…)* Why won't you attend a church?

9. a.) How do you feel about Christians/church people?

10. a.) Do you think that praying helps your situation?
    b.) *(Why or why not?)*
    c.) How frequently do you pray?

Please Complete

Name: _____ Sex: Female Male

Unit #: _____

Contact Phone #: (____) ____-_____

Community: Davisville / Kippax / Langston Park / Piper Square / Thomas Rolfe Court

Date: _____

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